An Analysis of the Branch Level Activities of the Coventry National Association of Schoolmasters/ Union of Women Teachers with particular reference to the role of the Local Executive.

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by

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SUMMARY

Through participant observation, structured and informal interviews, supported by documentary evidence and a questionnaire, this study examines the branch level activities of one small, urban local association of the NAS/UWT. After considering the growth and development of the national association, it looks at the growth of the local organization and its present structure. It argues that school representatives are in an ambiguous position in which they are subject to a variety of different expectations which they are not trained to fulfil and that the work of the association focuses on three key officers, the president, the treasurer and the secretary. Their roles are examined in some detail and so is the local executive committee, the meetings of which are the main arena in which the business of the local association is transacted. The secretary emerges as the central figure in the local organization although much that he does is circumscribed by the activities of the LEA to which he has to respond on behalf of the local NAS/UWT.

This study argues that the secretary and the other officers have to justify their actions to the membership. They do this through a language of legitimation which contains four elements, professionalism, individualism, collectivism and accommodation. The members can accept or reject those justifications depending on whether or not they are thought to be appropriate in a specific context. It is through this negotiation of justifications between officers and members that control and influence are exercised within the organization. The conclusion is drawn that the nature of trade union activity in general,and of trade union government in particular, can be better understood through the observations of how control and influence are negotiated than through debates about the nature of structural arrangements for transferring power within trade unions.

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES PAGE NO.

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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEA	Campaign for Educational Advance
CJC	Consultative Joint Committee of the Coventry LEA
CSSC	Conditions of Service Sub-Committee of the Coventry NAS/UWT
DES	Department of Education and Science
ESC	Education Sub-Committee of the Coventry NAS/UWT
LEA	Local Education Authority
NALGO	National Association of Local Government Officers
NAS	National Association of Schoolmasters
NAS/UWT	National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers
NUPE	National Union of Public Employees
NUT	National Union of Teachers
RSC	Recruitment Sub-Committee of the Coventry NAS/UWT

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Democracy in Trade Unions

On 11th January 1983 the Secretary of State for Employment published a Green Paper on 'Democracy in Trade Unions' (Department of Employment, 1983). This Green Paper considered a number of possible legislative measures to require, among other things, the use of secret ballot in union elections and to compel the holding of secret ballots before strikes. In introducing his Green Paper the Secretary of State claimed that there was a strong feeling in the country that trade unions ought to be democratic institutions which were responsive to the views and wishes of their members but, since many trade unions failed to ballot their members on even the most major decisions affecting them, including the choice of their leaders or the calling of strikes, their practices were incompatible with democratic traditions (Department of Employment, 1983). He argued that the Green Paper was concerned with the restoring of democracy in trade unions through the introduction of legislation requiring the use of secret ballots in the internal elections of trade unions. Four minimum standards of democracy which union election arrangements should attain are set out. These are that all members entitled to vote should be able to do so in circumstances which provide the best opportunity of a reasonable turn out; that voting should take place in conditions of secrecy; that votes are counted fairly; and that those who take decisions at the highest level are properly representative of and accountable to the membership as a whole.

Predictably the trade unions responded by claiming not only

were they democratic but that unions have developed a variety of decision-making procedures which derive from the needs, experiences and the nature of the occupations and industries in which their members work and to impose uniform procedures on all unions, irrespective of the members' wishes and interests, would be the reverse of democracy (TUC, 1983). The General Secretary of the TUC argued that the wide diversity of democratic procedures and patterns of organizations to be found within the trade union movement are open to internal change but they represent one of the strengths of the movement rather than rendering trade unions undemocratic (Murray, 1983).

Thus the debate about trade union government focuses on the nature of procedures through which leaders are chosen and changed. Since, on the one side, the argument is being conducted by politicians who are directly concerned with elections and procedures for conducting them while, on the other side, the responses are being made by the unions who find themselves in what is essentially a re-active position in the debate, that is a position of answering charges rather than one of taking initiatives, the content and the nature of the argument is not really surprising. It might be expected, however, that at some point the wider issues about representation and participation in trade unions would receive some consideration.

Both sides in this debate seems to accept the assumption that the fundamental determinant of the extent to which the leaders of a union can be said to represent the views of the members is to be found in an analysis of the structure of that union. Perhaps this implies a much narrower perspective on the parameters of such an analysis, arguing as it does that democratically conducted elections are the main, if not the only acceptable criterion by which a truely

representative organization might be recognised. In attempting to determine the extent to which trade unions are democratic, election or, indeed, selection of leaders is only one aspect of many which may need to be examined. Elections themselves are only a small part of the procedures which are available in any trade union through which the members and the officers may seek to control and influence each other. It will be argued here that elections are not, by any means, the most important part of those procedures. It will also be suggested throughout this thesis that the extent to which trade unions are democratic is, in fact, a sterile question to ask. The concentration of analysis on election procedures as an indication of the extent to which officers represent the view of members and are controlled by those members merely serves to distract from the central issues in trade union government. Those issues concern the ways in which officers actually do obtain from their members legitimation for those actions which are taken on behalf of those members, and the ways in which members seek to influence the behaviour of their leaders however those leaders may be elected or selected.

Trade Union Government

A significant part of the academic discussion on the nature of trade union government has been developed within the same context as that of the Green Paper. Thus it has defined structures for ensuring that members' views are represented in terms of procedures for enabling elections for office to take place rather than recognising that participation in decision-making invloves a far wider range of activities than the ballot, whether secret or otherwise. In one of the most influential attempts to approach trade union government in this way Lipset, (1956), discusses this topic in the very same terms

in which he had already sought to develop a pluralist analysis of political structures (1960). Thus Lipset expects to find at least two organised groups competing for power on a regular basis and then claims when, in most cases, he fails to identify such situations, that most unions are not democratic. The striking exception to this is the International Typographical Union, (ITU), which provided the evidence on which Lipset's analysis was based. His conclusion is that most unions obeyed the 'Iron Law of Oligrachy' which Michels propounded to explain the essentially oligarchical nature of large organizations (Lipset, 1956, 413).

Michels, (1962), has argued that the growth in size of organizations means that the administrative function which is carried out by the leadership will become so dominant that the leadership will become entrenched. The technical competence of the leaders will mean that they will not be able to be challenged by the membership. Their professional skill and political expertise, reinforced by mass apathy will constitute an overwhelming advantage in internal elections so that even the elected officer can become virtually irremovable. This upward distillation of power will, it is argued, take place in any formal organization even if that organization is based on explicitly democratic and egalitarian principles. Lipset provides evidence that this is, in fact, the case in the majority of unions. Lipset bases his argument, however, on an extremely simplistic conceptualisation of democratic procedures. The assumption that union democracy can be understood in terms of pluralism is not sophisticated enough.

Alternative approaches to the analysis of the trade union governmental procedures have been suggested in an attempt to establish the extent to which those procedures can be said to be democratic. The existence of active factions within the union has been proposed as a criterion of democracy (Martin, 1968). The closeness of elections for leadership positions has also been put forward as an alternative to the pluralistic formulations of Lipset, (Edelstein, 1967), since, it is claimed, this would give an indication of the strength on institutionalised opposition to existing leadership. All of these approaches, however, retain a preoccupation with structural mechanism similar to those hinted at in the Green Paper. These mechanisms may simply result in enabling the membership to play a relatively passive role in the election of an active elite which will directly represent them and which will be amenable to influence during the election period. Thus questions about union democracy are sterile since they produce answers about the extent to which unions have developed certain structural arrangements for the election of officers. A more fruitful field of analysis would be to examine the inter-relationship between officers, their activities, and the processes by which such activities are influenced by the members, explained and justified to the members, and receive legitimation from, or are challenged by, the members. A discussion of structural arrangements for the election of union officers would form a part of this analysis only to the extent that such arrangements were a significant part of the processes being considered. The focus would thus be, not on structural arrangements for participation in one aspect of trade union government, but on the actual involvement of officers and members in the shaping of the activities of a particular trade union.

Participation and Involvement

The approach to be adopted here will focus on the nature of participation and involvement in the activities of one union, that is the extent to which members take part in union affairs and express commitment to their unions. It will not concern itself with structural arrangements for the transfer of power between individuals or groups unless those arrangements appear to be significant in the processes of participation. As a result of the difficulties associated with defining and identifying democratic governmental structures within trade unions will not become a major pre-occupation but, rather, will be treated as what they are, side issues. Similarly, the value-laden debate about whether or not unions are democratic which is exemplified by the Green Paper and the work of, for example, Lipset (1956) will be subsumed under an empirically based analysis of participation in the affairs of a union. In particular, the nature of decision-making in key areas of the organisation and the ways in which significant decision-makers interact with the rank-and-file especially through those people why may legitimately claim to be representative of the membership whilst not being officers of the union, will be examined.

It is not intended here to attempt to identify different levels of involvement or to develop ways of quantifying the extent to which the total membership does or does not participate in decision-making processes. It will be argued that the level of involvement in decision-making is a function of a combination of factors which include the structuring of opportunities for involvement, the nature of the issues and the extent to which members accept the explanations and justifications which may, at any one time, be provided by the decision-makers in defence of their actions. Thus the extent to which members participate in union affairs will be seen as a product of the inter-relations between officers and members over specific issues.

Those inter-relationships will be seen to be related to the extent to which there are shared perceptions of appropriate aims, purpose, and methods within the organisation. It will be argued that it is through such inter-relationships that patterns of control and influence within the union emerge and are legitimated. Thus control of the leadership by the rank-and-file, where this occurs, will be presented as part of the processes by which the actions of the leadership are explained and justified to their members rather than as a function of structural arrangements for voting officers in or out of office, or as a series of referenda on significant issues. Similarly, the extent to which officers are able to conduct the affairs of the union without continually being subjected to challenges from the rank-and-file about their actions will be seen to be a result of a combination of those shared perceptions mentioned above and the degree to which member recognise as legitimate the explanations and justifications of their actions which are provided by the officers.

At the same time, the activities of the union will be seen to take place within a social, political and historical context which helps to determine the nature of those activities and the ways in which they are perceived by those people involved in them. This context includes the historical development of the union itself, the relationships between the various parts of its own organization, and its relationships with other organisations and, in particular, other unions and the employers. The relationships between this union and other organizations is especially significant since it is through these relationships that the unions' own self image has developed and is mediated.

Participation and involvement in union affairs can be approached in other ways. Nicholson, (1979:37), for example, has suggested that it is possible to construct a continuum of participation and involvement in union activities which might enable a more sensitive assessment of levels of involvement to be made than the simple distinction which is usually made between those members who are activists and those who are merely apathetic. Such a continuum would vary from, at the extreme, direct involvement in leadership through the holding of office to, and the other extreme, passive legitimation through the act of membership, the only criterion for which would be the payment of membership subscriptions. In between these extremes would be, for example, direct involvement in policy-making through attending meetings where decisions are collectively taken; exercising influence over the leadership by voting at elections; using union machinery for representation; and the passive receipt of ideas and information through reading bulletins. Such an approach has the advantage that it benefits from the inclusion of a range of criteria by which to identify involvement and participation rather than restricting analysis to one single criterion such as voting in elections or attending meetings. It also recognises that participation involves a range of activities including taking decisions, being consulted, and being informed of decisions after they are made.

An analysis based on such an approach, whilst taking into account a range of criteria by which participation and involvement may be identified, may ignore two other significant factors. It may not take into account the extent to which involvement may be issue specific. That is the extent to which members and, indeed, officers may move from one level of participation or involvement to another according to the nature of particular issues and the way in which they are perceived to relate to members own individual

interests or the interests of the membership at large. Given that such shifts do take place, this type of approach may not only fail to recognise that this is the case but may also be unable to provide explanations for such changes. Questions about why the nature of participation and involvement in union activities may change are as important for developing an understanding of that participation and involvement as is the identification of criteria according to which levels of participation and involvement may be established. It will be argued here that not only do such changes in involvement take place as a normal part of union activity but that explanations for those changes can be located within the nature of that activity itself, and in the ways in which justifications and explanations concerning that activity are presented and received.

The Union Branch

The main direct contact which most union members have is with their branch or their workplace organization. It is at branch level where the conflict which Child, Loveridge and Warner, (1973), have identified between administrative rationality which stems from the top of the organizational hierarchy, and representative rationality which is located in the grass roots of the organizational hierarchy may be thought to take place. It is at branch level where the electoral arrangements which are criticised in the Green Paper have their main focus and have much of their impact. Similarly, it is through the local organization that procedures similar to those within the ITU which were so admired by Lipset might be seen to operate.

It has been argued that the status of workers measured in terms of age, job skills, position on the production line and so on is a significant factor in determining the extent to which individual workers will participate in union affairs at local level (Sayles

and Strauss, 1967). It has also been argued that the nature of the workplace itself is also significant (Spinrad, 1960). Small plants and a stable work force contributed towards a more widespread involvement in union decision-making. With increasing job satisfaction, Spinrad (1960) claimed, came a related increase in participation in union activities. If job satisfaction, however that may be measured, can in any way be associated with jobs of relatively high status, then these findings tend to confirm those of Sayles and Strauss, (1967). Such findings do assume, however, that participation is a relatively stable activity in itself rather than, for most members of unions, an issue specific variable. Thus little or no account is taken of periodic changes in participation at branch level. The main concern appears to be with absolute participation measured by percentage attendances at branch meetings.

The branch is normally seen as being that part of trade union structure which serves as a two-way communication between the rank-and file and those at a high level in the organization and, therefore, it is often regarded as the democratic foundation upon which the structure rests e.g. (Goldstein, 1952). In practice, however, branch meetings are often poorly attended and, it is sometimes argued by implication at least, these meetings are therefore open to manipulation by small, unrepresentative groups. Goldstein, (1952), found in one union that only 20 to 30 members in each thousand attended branch meetings whilst the average attendance at branch meetings in unions has been put at between 4% and 7% (Roberts, 1956).

If the main contact between the national and local union is through officials who were elected at such meetings and who then maintain their contact with the local membership through such poorly attended meetings then there are legitimate grounds for concern

about the extent to which such officers represent the views of the members. Similarly, if participation and involvement in local union affairs are only measured in terms of attendance at branch meetings, then it can be argued with some justification that most union members have little or no interest in the activities of their union. These are important issues which deserve serious consideration and, therefore , this study will concentrate on the branch level activities of one union.

It has already been suggested that participation and involvement in union activities can be indentified in a number of ways only one of which is involvement in branch meetings. Similarly, the influence which the rank-and-file is traditionally expected to bring to bear on local union leaders through participation in branch meetings, needs to be placed in a context which is wider than that of the branch meeting. Consideration has to be given to the extent to which local organization can and does establish its own priorities independently of the larger union. At the same time it has to be recognised that no union at local, regional or national level operates in a vacuum. Thus the inter-relationship between the local organization and other groups such as the employers have to be recognized as does the part played by such groups in determining the content and nature of local trade union activities. The levels of participation in those activities, it will be argued, is informed by a recognition by the members of the degree to which much of local union activity depends on the initiatives taken by other groups which are outside the direct sphere of influence of the local union. Nevertheless, members do seek to exert control and influence over their officers in a variety of ways, especially when the actions taken by those officers do not seem appropriate to the members in the particular circumstances. Similarly, officers

do seek to exert control and influence over members through the explanations and justifications which they give for their actions, the priorities which they seek to establish for their activities and the methods which they adopt to pursue those priorities. It can be seen, therefore, that all the central issues in trade union government concerned with control and influence, participation and involvement, representation of members' views, and the mobilization of support for action taken, can all be found in the local activities of a trade union.

The National Assosication of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers

The National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NAS/UWT) is an interesting union in its own right. It enjoys a reputation for militancy which is rare among teachers' unions. It was at the time of this study, and still is, almost obsessed with the idea of increasing its membership and it grew rapidly during the 1970s. It has a very simple organizational structure which allows the national leadership almost direct access to activities at local level and, therefore, it might be assumed that the national organization could and would exert considerable influence over the local associations. Most of the conditions in which Michels, (1962), expected oligarchy to flourish could be found in the NAS/UWT at this time.

Occupational groupings of professional and white collar workers may range from sectoral unions such as the National Association of Local Government Officers, (NALGO), to those with a more specific occupational character like the Union of Teachers, (NUT), but many of them are somewhat ambiguous about the extent to which they espouse those collective philosophies which inform much of union activity and about the degree to which their members are willing to become involved in militant action in support of their union. The NAS/UWT has a tradition of militancy and a clear, unambiguous self

image which it projects forcefully at national level. It is also one of a group of unions about which little has been written, for although there is a considerable literature on teachers and teaching in Britain, the occupational organizations which seek to represent teachers have gone largely unconsidered in the industrial relations literature.

This situation may exist because there is little or nothing of interest to say. The general lack of comment and information, however, suggests that the subject has been ignored. Perhaps this is because of the ambiguity which surrounds the industrial relations aspects of the activities of these organizations. Increasingly, however, they appear to be involving themselves in many of those activities which have normally been regarded as the province of the more traditional trade unions. A more likely explanation for this lack of literature may be found in the background and interests of those academics whose province education has normally been. That is the psychologists, philosophers, historians and, more latterly, the sociologists. It is not accidental that two of the six major works written about teachers' organizations in this country have been historical (Gosden, 1972; Tropp, 1956). These two do, however, share the preoccupations of the other four with questions related to the macro level of collective action and the making of educational policy (Burke, 1971: Coates,1972: Manzer, 1970: Roy, 1968). Only Roy, (1968), is specifically concerned with the structure and government of teachers' unions. In his description of the NUT he outlines the formal channels of communication, electoral processes and the extent to which the school representative is said to be central within the local organization since it is that position which is most likely to provide the workplace representation of members. Information about the rank-and-file and general branch level activities

is confined to voting statistics and attendance figures for meetings. Thus the focus is on the formal structure at national level although concern is expressed at the apathy in the NUT on the part of the rank-and-file which manifests itself through low attendance at local branch meetings. Other forms of branch activity and other types of participation and involvement are not considered.

Roy, (1968) does make the interesting and important point that since the coming of national bargaining in 1944, the average NUT member has very little influence over salaries and conditions. Again only a study of local branch activity would reveal the extent to which this was, in fact, the case and what significance it had, if any, for trade union activity at a local level. Boraston, Clegg and Rimmer, (1975), have argued that there need not be any real significance for local union activity in the extent to which wages are determined by tight national agreements. They have suggested that whilst the tight or loose nature of such national agreements may be important for determining the scope of some bargaining procedures, there need be no positive correlation between the nature of the national agreements and the extent of local autonomy. Thus Roy's work serves only to show how little is known about the operation of teachers' unions, particularly at local level (Roy, 1964: Roy, 1968).

Manzer, (1970), is also concerned with the NUT. He also focuses on the national level, looking at the role of the NUT in the formulation of national educational policy in England and Wales since 1944. He attributes to the NUT the desire to advance certain educational ideas and, therefore, he tends to treat the NUT as a professional association seeking to further educational objectives rather than as a trade union with a collectivist philosophy. He thus ignores its essentially

collectivist stance on many issues such as salaries, superannuation and teacher supply, which are the very issues with which he concerns himself in his study of educational policy. Manzer, (1970), therefore ignores the extent to which much of the activity of professional associations is, in fact, very similar to that of trade unions and thus he does not question the validity of the distinction which he assumes to exist between professional associations and trade unions. Although Manzer, (1970), is concerned with the influence of the NUT on national educational policy, he does not always make it clear for whom the NUT is acting in particular instances since, at various times the appeal appears to be the interests of the community at large, teachers in general, the NUT's own membership and, even, specific parts of that membership which is extremely hetrogeneous in nature. Certainly the NUT, according to Manzer, (1970), would like to see itself to be articulating general principles for the common good but not everyone would agree that this is what actually happens. Not least amongst this group are the members of the NAS/UWT who appear to share a very different view of the role of a teachers' union in educational policy-making and to have different opinions about how far such a union should even attempt to articulate principles which derive from any interests other than those of its own membership.

Coates, (1972), also explores the relationship between teachers' unions and government in that his main interest is the behaviour of those unions in relation to the government during the 1960s. His specific intention is to consider the emergence of new strategies and tactics in that period. He explains why changes in incomes policy and economic planning made it difficult for the Department of Education and Science, (DES), at act autonomously. This, in turn,

led to the revision of tactics on the part of the teachers' unions. He reveals little about how the unions carried out this revision or why certain strategies, such as the alliance with organized labour, were chosen instead of others which also might have been considered. He is also vague about the extent to which there was general agreement about these alterations in strategy and produces no evidence about the great policy debate which might have been expected to accompany such radical changes. This could be because there was no such debate or, more probably, because Coates, (1972), does not examine the rank-and-file attitude to such shifts in tactics since it is there where disagreements about such changes might have been located. Instead he concentrates on the activities of the national leadership because,

> ...the existence of formally democratic processes of internal government still leaves immense freedom of action to the executive committees and to full-time national officials (Coates, 1972:124).

His sources are almost entirely documentary. Only occasionally are these supplemented by interviews and only then with leading officials of the unions. Thus he continually associates policy with leadership and decisions with the actions of officials. The great mass of the membership is ignored not only here but in most of the literature.

Only Burke, (1971), who concentrates on one of the tactics discussed by Coates, (1972), namely militant action by the teachers' unions during the 1969-70 salary campaign, conveys a more detailed impression of rank-and-file feeling based on wide ranging discussions with educational leaders, politicians and on newspaper articles and other secondary sources. Even Burke, (1971), however, concentrates on the role of national leaders in this particular crisis whilst

his whole approach to the collection of data was far from systematic. One is left wondering just how far the members of one union would have agreed with the statement reported to have been made by their general secretary that militancy is like Marmite, a little goes a long way (Burke, 1971:97).

It can be seen, therefore, that the literature on teachers' organizations is deficient in a number of ways. No attempt has been made to locate the activities of these organizations within a framework derived from industrial relations which might contain an analysis of union activity where such activity is defined in terms of the aims, purposes, and methods of a trade union instead of, as so often has happened, presenting the activities of teachers' unions merely as an adjunct to general educational policy-making. The nature of trade union activity, the patterns of control and influence over that activity, the degree to which that activity accords with the wishes and perceived interests of union members, and the extent to which the members themselves participate in determining the actions which are carried out in their name would all form a central part of such an analysis.

If the view of the activities of teachers' organizations which emerges from the literature is a very partial one to the extent that it fails to consider as central the essentially industrial relations aspects of that activity, it is also narrow in another way. The literature tends to deal either with situations in which general issues are dealt with by the teachers' unions in a more or less concerted way, (Burke, 1971), which thus minimizes the crucial differences between those organizations, or else it deals with the largest union, the NUT, to the exclusion of all others (Roy, 1968: Manzer, 1970). The only other significant study of a teachers' professional organization other than the NUT, is that by Browne, (1979),

of the now defunct Association of Teachers in Colleges and Departments of Education, (ATCDE), which was merged into the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education, (NATFHE), before its history was published. Thus the NAS/UWT, the second largest teachers' union, receives little or no treatment in its own right.

This is equally true of the local levels of teachers' organizations. They clearly receive only passing mention in the discussion of general educational policy-making and the strategies and tactics adopted in pursuit of related objectives. Within the literature on the NUT the rank-and-file is treated in the most simplistic of ways and there is little analysis worthy of the name which concerns itself with branch level activities. Local leaders and local officers in the teachers' unions remain shadowy and anonymous figures. The role they play within their own unions is not considered in the literature. The same is true of school representatives except in so far as their crucial importance in the day to day activities of the unions receives a passing mention and their duties are described in the unions' handbooks. This study will seek to begin to remedy these deficiencies by looking at the branch level activities of one branch of the NAS/UWT and by focusing in particular on the part played in those activities by the officers of the local association.

The Coventry NAS/UWT

The Coventry NAS/UWT is a medium sized, well established local association with a small but active group of officers and members who are reasonably well respected within what is a fairly closely knit local education authority. Coventry Local Education Authority is a homogeneous city authority within the boundaries of which the activities of the local association of the NAS/UWT tend, now, to be

confined although, for reasons which will be discussed in Chapter 3, this has not always been the case. Thus it is a relatively compact local association within a similarly compact local education authority (LEA). As such its activities were far more easy to monitor than, say, those of a sprawling city wide association like Birmingham or those of an association divided into a number of divisions like that in London.

How typical the Coventry NAS/UWT local association is of NAS/UWT local associations is extremely difficult to assess, especially given the almost total lack of systematic information on the local branches of any teachers' union. It is, therefore, difficult to determine how far the findings of this study can be generally applied to other local associations of the NAS/UWT, to the local associations of other teachers' unions or to other unions in general. It will be argued, especially in Chapters 8 and 9, that some possible generalizations do emerge. In the opinion of the NAS/UWT's General Secretary, Terry Casey, the Coventry local association is fairly typical of associations of its size except that, in Casey's view, it was fortunate in having what he described as an outstanding local secretary (NAS/UWT, 1976b).

With the blessing of both its General Secretary and its local association secretary, the Coventry NAS/UWT was willing to give full and immediate access to all of its activities and documents to a research worker who had previously been a member of the National Association of Schoolmasters, (NAS), as well as, at other times, the NUT, ATCDE, NATFHE and the General and Municipal Worker's Union. As a result of this access it was possible to base the study on two main approaches and to provide supplementary evidence in a number of different ways. The main forum for discussing NAS/UWT business

in Coventry was the executive committee meeting. The research worker was able to attend all of these meetings during the period of the study as an observer, and had access to all documents, minutes and other materials which were distributed from time to time in the meetings. The attendance at these meetings was sufficiently large to enable an outside observer to attend and takes notes without being obtrusive and without influencing events by his presence. Similar observation was also possible of general and officers' meetings although the attendance at the latter was rarely more than 7 and, therefore, an outside observer was more obtrusive than at the executive meetings. (See Appendix E).

Much of the rest of the evidence was collected through a series of interviews with key officers of the local association, the president, the treasurer and the secretary. Each of the first two officers was the subject of a long, structured interview which covered the same areas including attitudes to the secretary, views on the work of the executive, background in and approaches to trade unionism and views on their own roles within the local association. These interviews provided the content for much of Chapter 5. The secretary was also the subject of a similar structured interview. He was, at the same time, the subject of five other interviews conducted at intervals of approximately two months throughout the period of this study. The content of these interviews covered current casework, matters which emerged from executive or other meetings, and anything else which the secretary or the interviewer regarded as important for the local NAS/UWT or the wider educational setting within the City.

This series of interviews and the continuous observation of the executive meetings was supplemented in a number of different ways. The evidence on which Chapter 4 and other discussions of workplace

representation came from two sources. The research worker was an observer at the planning meetings for the two schoolrepresentative training courses as well as at the courses themselves. Each of the school representatives who attended those courses was given a questionnaire about workplace representation and a stamped, addressed envelope (see Appendix A). Twelve replies were received from each of the two groups. Eight schools were represented at the secondary school training session, giving a response rate of 66% for the questionnaires from that group. Twenty primary school representatives attended their training course, giving response rate for that group of 60%.

There were also a small number of other interviews carried out with the main objective of verifying information obtained in other ways although one of these, with the press officer of the NUT, provided material about the local structure of that union. The interview with the LEA officer, although mainly about matters unconnected with this study, was used to obtain the LEA's views about ways in which the two main teachers' unions conducted themselves in Coventry. In a similar way the interview with the NAS/UWT General Secretary provided information about the national-local relationships with particular reference to the Coventry local association. The constitution of the Coventry NAS/UWT, its bulletin and other items of local publicity were used together with the national Guide for School Representatives , (NAS/UWT, 1977a), the journal of the national association, and conference reports from the 1976 and 1977 Annual Conferences to provide detailed background information where this was relevant.

No attempt was made to collect data from the rank-and-file of the local association for two reasons. This study was not intended to be a survey of membership attitudes of the type carried out recently by, Fosh, for example, because of the conceptual difficulties associated with such studies which lead them to focus on general stereotypes such as 'actives' and inactives' rather than to look at the importance of specific issues for encouraging participation (Fosh, 1981). Of more importance, however, was the actual location of trade union activity within the local association. This, for reasons outlined in Chapters 3 and 4, was not in the schools but, rather, was to be found at the executive committee level of the local organization. This study, therefore, was based on full and, in practical terms, easy access which was one of the considerations which informed the choice of the Coventry NAS/UWT as the subject of this research. Of far more importance for the choice of research topic, however, was the way in which the chosen subject might make it possible to begin to fill in some of the gaps in the state of knowledge about teachers' unions generally and about the NAS/UWT in particular.

The characteristics of the Coventry NAS/UWT itself were of considerable importance in chosing it as a topic for research. It had, like its own national body, recently experienced a growth in membership within Coventry. It had, again like the national NAS, recently merged with the local UWT. This merger had been seen as an opportunity to re-organize the structure of the local association in the face of declining attendances at local branch meetings in an attempt to provide greater opportunities for members to involve

themselves in the work of the local association in ways other than merely attending branch meetings and voting in elections. Clearly the assumption of the officers and more active members of the Coventry NAS/UWT was that the willingness amongst members to participate was there if only the appropriate opportunities were provided. In the event, it turned out that this assumption was partly correct but that once an important issue emerged, members were not only willing and able but also anxious to participate in ways which they, the membership, deemed to be suitable and appropriate.

The Coventry NAS/UWT is interesting in other ways related to its position within the wider context of the Coventry educational world. Although both nationally and locally the NAS/UWT justifiably claims to be the second largest teachers' union, in Coventry it is, in size at least, a very poor second to the NUT. This obviously presents problems of credibility, recruitment and access to the sources of decision-making within Coventry. The Coventry NAS/UWT is, in terms of its size, relatively powerless. It is a smaller union operating in a wider context yet it has been able to develop strategies and tactics which have enabled it to represent its members reasonably effectively and efficiently in such a situation. Here is a local association whose activities are based on a recognition of its own relatively powerless position rather than an all powerful or perhaps even a too powerful union. In many ways, it might be argued that the Coventry NAS/UWT is more typical than otherwise in this regard for, although many unions will not be forced to operate in a context which includes similar yet larger unions with whom they may be in competition for members and access to levels of decision-making

which are relevant to their members' interests, some unions undoubtedly, will find themselves in such situations. Many more will find themselves having to respond to initiatives taken elsewhere, by employers for example, rather than being able to take initiatives as a matter of course for themselves.

Thus there is a situation in which full access is granted to a local association which has recently undergone structural changes and yet has a history of steady growth and development, and which has a small number of fairly experienced and competent officers. The local association's functions are clearly defined in terms of the self image of the union which is presented at national level with the intention of attracting a particular type of member. It is forced to operate in a context within which there also operates a much larger competing union and an employer who is responsible for a relatively coherent enterprise which it runs according to clearly established policies and who is capable and willing to initiate a wide range of actions within that context.

Conclusion

In both political and academic spheres, the problems associated with membership participation in trade unions, has often been approached through a series of simplistic analogies drawn between the body politic and the governmental structure of trade unions. Such analogies have led to a sterile preoccupation with arrangements for the transfer of power between small groups within unions rather than a more sensitive analysis of the processes by which trade union members can and do, or, at worst might, influence their leaders and ensure that the actions carried out in the name of the members of trade unions do have their imprimatur of approval. These same analogies

have enabled statements and assumptions to be made about the failure of members to participate in the activities of their unions and about the extent to which union officials are out of touch with the interests and wishes of their members which may or may not bear any relation to the actual situation. Definitions of participation and criteria used to indentify it have been seen as to focus attention upon but one small aspect of union activity and the involvement of the rank-and-file in that activity. Many of the processes by which members influence leaders and officers and by which officers justify and explain their actions to members have been ignored in the attempt to discuss structures which might enable power formally to be transferred.

At the same time much of the real essence of union activity has escaped attention in this context. Branch level studies have often focused on meetings and voting in the belief that these are the major mechanisms of control and influence. It will be argued that they, in fact, merely combine with other structural elements within the local union and significant aspects of the wider occupational context to form an arena within which such influence and control is negotiated. This arena will be populated not only by the members and officials of the union but by other unions and the employers and their representatives who will play a significant role in determining the nature of trade union activity in that arena.

The weaknesses in analysis of union activity indentified in the industrial relations literature as a whole are even more evident in the sparse available literature on teachers' unions. Most of this literature has not been informed by insights already developed in the field of industrial relations, tending instead to be historical or concerned with the making of educational policy in the broadest sense. At the same time this literature has ignored the existence of many of the teachers' unions as far as detailed

analysis is concerned to the extent of there not being any literature devoted to the second largest of those unions. There is no evidence of any attempt to give serious and detailed consideration to the local activities of any of the teachers' unions at all.

This study, by focusing on the local activities of the Coventry branch of the second largest teachers' union, is to be a first step in changing that situation. It will attempt to place those activities in the context of insights gained from other studies of trade union. It will seek to examine the extent and nature of the participation in those activities of officers, executive members, school representatives and, through these three groups, the rank-and-file itself. It will examine the influence which the rank-and-file can and does bring to bear on its representatives within the local union structure and to which it, in turn, is subjected. In so doing it is first necessary to consider the very nature of that rank-and-file which, as will be argued in the next chapter, is determined to a large part by the historical context within which the national union was founded and developed. It is to this historical context and the way in which it combined with other factors to establish those characteristics which differentiated the NAS/UWT from other teachers' unions that attention now turns.

CHAPTER 2

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLMASTERS

Introduction

Much of what a local branch or local association of a trade union does is the direct product of its local circumstances and local organization. The structure of the NAS local associations are locally determined. As in most unions, the quality of local officers, although of great concern to both regional and national officials, is a factor of local membership and not normally directly amenable to influence from outside the local organization. At the same time local union activity takes place within a framework which is influenced by the larger national structure since local branches are not totally independent, autonomous groups. In the NAS the national body plays the major part in negotiating agreements about salaries and conditions of service. The union rule book, The Guide to School Representatives, (NAS/UWT, 1977a), is produced as a result of the deliberations of the national executive. This, as will be shown in subsequent chapters, indicates how local activities are to be conducted and by whom. It also sets out the extent to which the local association may act independently of the national body and makes clear the point at which groups other than the local association must become concerned in local affairs. Thus there exists a formal relationship between the national and local elements of the structure.

There is also an informal aspect to the same relationship. This will be considered in some detail when the activities of the local association and its officers are discussed. It will be seen that this aspect of the national-local relationship depends upon a set of perceptions about the NAS and its national and regional representatives. These perceptions, like many others to be found

within the Coventry NAS/UWT, are a product of the inter-relationships between the local members and officers. In this instance these perceptions consist of notions about what the appropriate role of the national headquarters should be, from a local point of view, in local activities; appraisals of regional and national executive members and their abilities; concerns about the nature and content of information which is passed from headquarters to the local association; and views about the appropriateness or otherwise of national attempts to influence local activities and to steer them in certain directions. It will be shown that the local association is neither totally dependent upon the national association nor totally independent of it, and that the relationship between the local and national parts of the NAS changes over time and according to the particular situation.

The national structure of the union, its aims and purposes, and the methods which it uses to achieve them together with a nationally based view of the significant characteristics of the NAS's membership combine to form an entity with an identity of its own. It is with this entity that the local associations form relationships. It is with reference to those aims, purposes and methods that the local associations form views about their own aims, purposes and methods for, even when some aspect of local activity differs from the national stance, local officers are normally aware of what the national stance is and may have to take a conscious decision to adopt a different position. It is through channels of communication established nationally that relationships between the national and local bodies are conducted. Thus the national structure of the union, the ways

in which that structure influences or fails to influence local activities, and the place of the local association in the national structure are of some significance for the development of an understanding of local activities. It has been argued, (Boraston, Clegg, and Rimmer, 1975), that it is at the national level that most crucial decisions concerning local union activity, its methods and its priorities are taken. This may not be true for the Coventry NAS/UWT for, as will be argued in Chapters 6 and 7, there may be significant departures from the national views at local level and especially among local officers. Nevertheless, local activity takes place within and is informed by the national structure. Therefore the nature of that structure, the aims and purposes which it espouses, the methods which it employs and the perceptions of its membership which it embodies are all relevant to the discussion of the Coventry local association.

Growth and Development

In order to understand the nature of the membership of the NAS, and its aims, purposes and methods, it is necessary to place the growth and development of the union in its historical context. This context is of particular significance since much of the subsequent activity of the NAS, especially its concern for recruitment, its relationships with the NUT, and its attitudes towards militancy and trade unionism in general, derive directly from the experience of those early years. The NAS, like all other trade unions, is a product of its historical context. The circumstances of the association's foundation and its early struggle to establish a place for itself in the educational world with reference to employers at both national and local levels and to the major teachers' union, the NUT, required that the NAS created a separate identity for itself.

The exclusion of the association from the main arena of wage bargaining forced it to focus upon other arenas of trade union activity and, as a result, it developed a clear identity and attracted a membership which was different from that of other teachers' unions.

The NAS came into being in 1922 when, in the words of its current General Secretary,

> The interests of men teachers were being threatened by an egalitarian policy which demanded justice for women teachers no matter what this might do to the levels of pay, (Casey, 1975: 101).

The association was formed when a predominantly non-grammar secondary school group of male teachers left the NUT which they regarded as being dominated by women primary school teachers and headteachers whose interests were different from those of the male career teacher. The actual split was a response to the NUT's endorsement of a policy of pursuing equal pay for women within the teaching profession (Locke, 1974). For many years after the separation the NAS continued its campaign against equal pay for women since, it was argued, the salaries of well qualified men were being depressed by the women within the teaching force. Not surprisingly this all-male organization wanted higher maximum pay scales in order to provide a greater reward for long service at the expense of young women who, as the NAS argued, left the service after only a few years (Kogan, 1974). As it turned out, equal pay for women did not become a reality in the teaching profession until the 1950's after which the NAS began to push for the maintenance of significant salary differentials for 'career teachers' who were, according to the NAS, more likely than not to be male (Thornton, 1982).

It was only after women teachers had achieved equal pay that the NAS found itself admitted to the Burnham Negotiation System which played a central role in determining teachers' salaries. Thus its stance on equal pay for women was never a major contributing factor in preventing the establishment of a common salary scale for all teachers. This aspect of NAS policy was far more important for the part it played in enabling the NAS to develop an identity of its own which, in turn, enabled it to appeal to a particular section of the teaching force and to recruit from that section. Its exclusion from the teachers' panel of the Burnham negotiating system had, however, a series of important ramifications for the NAS,. Access to the machinery for negotiating salaries is important for any union since it is through such machinery that members' immediate interests are seen to be pursued in the most tangible of ways. The salaries of both primary and secondary school teachers in England and Wales are determined nationally by the Burnham Committee. This has representatives of the major teachers' unions forming one 'panel' or negotiating team. Representatives of the Department of Education and Science and the local education authorities make up the other panel. Since the Burnham Committee establishes not only the global sums to be paid to teachers, but also the ways in which such sums are to be combined and distributed in the form of separate scales for different types of teachers with different responsibilities, experience and qualifications, it is here that the policy of creating a salary structure suitable for career teachers would have to be formulated and implemented. Thus representation on Burnham was crucial to the NAS. Attempts to obtain

such representation played a central part in the activities of the NAS for the first forty years of its history and, for reasons which will be considered below, was instrumental in shaping the association's approach to recruitment, its notions of what activities were appropriate to a teachers' union, and its very definition of the nature of trade union activity itself.

Since its foundation the NAS had repeatedly sought representation on the Burnham Committee. A number of official applications and deputations between 1923 and 1961 had failed to gain the association any form of representation. As a result of diligent lobbying the NAS's claim for representation was supported by a large number of back-bench Conservative MP's (Kogan, 1975). Such support may also have been based on the relatively conservative stances taken on a range of educational issues by the NAS. Successive Ministers of Education refused to consider the association's demand for some representation on Burnham for fear, it might be argued, of alienating the much larger NUT. This exclusion from Burnham was damaging to the NAS because it denied the association access to salary negotiations and also because, in spite of the fact that Burnham has no real jurisdiction over conditions of service or anything other than teachers' salaries, successive Ministers of Education used the committee to consult teachers' associations on a wide range of non-salary issues.

Faced with another government rebuff in 1960, the NAS extended the range of tactics which it was prepared to employ. It began a two-part campaign. The first part was a continuation of its long-standing policy of Parlimentary pressure. By early in 1961

it had won the support of 235 MPs. The NAS also turned to direct action. In February 1961 it held a mass rally in London which was attended by 6,000 members. At its 1961 conference, delegates voted for 'militant action' to protest against the association's continued exclusion from Burnham and against the lack of an independent enquiry into teachers' salaries as well as against the continued underpayment of schoolmasters. All the NAS grievances were there. A series of local strikes followed in each of which members from a single school were withdrawn for a day, thus causing maximum disruption with minimum member inconvenience and loss of pay. In the Autumn of the same year, the NAS called the first national strike of teachers in England and Wales. The national officers must have been extremely confident about the support which they might expect from their members, since teachers have been very reluctant to use strike action as a weapon to enforce their demands (Thornton, 1982). The confidence appears to have been justified. On 20th September 1961, more than 20,000 teachers came out for a one-day stoppage. At least 18,000 attended protest meetings in central London and in eight regional centres selected, in part, because they were near to where television news centres were located. In the wake of this strike the Minister of Education agreed to meet the Association and eventually gave the NAS two of the four seats which they had been demanding on the teachers' panel of the Burnham Committee. This was later increased to six seats as the membership of the NAS increased.

Throughout its campaign for representation on Burnham, as in its previous forty years of existence, the policies of the NAS were intended to appeal primarily to male teachers who were located mainly in secondary schools and, later, in comprehensive schools and for whom teaching was a career rather than, in terms of NAS mythology, an interlude between higher education and marriage. Those policies

did attract a small but significant number of women teachers. In 1967 these women formed the Union of Women Teachers, a sister organization for the NAS which played a major part in its birth and continued to foster it during its separate existence. The UWT shared the NAS headquarters at Hemel Hempstead, benefited from a number of NAS specialist services, and supported NAS policies on a wide range of issues such as professional standards, salaries and conditions of service. It had no seats on Burnham and so was represented there by the NAS which, by the time the UWT was founded, had won its battle for representation on the teachers' panel (Pollard, 1974).

The natural outcome of such a close relationship was a marriage between the men and the women and, in 1976, such a union took place. This resulted in the creation of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NAS/UWT), a title which continues to haunt its membership inspite of several vain attempts to shorten it in a number of ingenious and, some might argue, suggestive ways. Such amalgamations do not always prove to be successful since the willingness to co-operate cannot be assumed to exist. Nor can it merely be left to chance. This was equally true of the NAS/UWT but there was, already, a high degree of co-operation and one partner was clearly the senior of the two. The merger was seen as a strenthening of both parties. It provided additional resources including greater numbers for the UWT. At the same time it provided for the NAS a valuable broadening of its membership base in primary education where, because this was dominated by women teachers, the NAS was seriously under-represented. Both sides, therefore, had much to gain. Each had something of value to contribute. As will be seen, the merger provided some local associations with the opportunity to reorganize

and rationalize their local structure. At national level the merger brought in to the NAS 16,000 women teachers, many of whom were strategically placed so as to boost membership in an important sector of education.

Whilst increasing the total membership was not the only object of the NAS/UWT merger it was , for both parties, an important aspect of it. The NAS had always recruited vigorously because, in the first instance, its demand for representation on Burnham depended directly om being able to claim to represent a significant proportion of teachers. The size of its representation on Burnham continues to be based, albeit loosely, on its claim to membership. The number of seats given to the various teacher unions is determined by the government and there are no legally prescribed criteria for apportioning representation. The distribution of seats appears to reflect historical factors as in the case of the continued representation of the tiny, but historically significant, Secondary Heads' Assocation which was formed as a result of a merger between the Headmasters' Association, formally an organization for grammar school headmasters, and the Association of Headmistresses. Representation also reflects membership although, as can be seen from Table I, the continued ability of the NUT to out vote all of the other unions combined is no longer a reflection of its overall superiority in size. It is an effort to eliminate this historical claim to control the teachers' panel of the Burnham Committee that the NAS/UWT continues to recruit, nationally at least, in such a vigorous fashion.

Table I. Teacher Union Representative on the Burnham Primary and Secondary Committee, 1981

Union	Approximate Membership Primary and Secondary Sector		Seats on Burnham Committee	
National Union of Teachers (NUT)	250,000		16	
National Association of Schoolmasters/ Union of Women Teachers (NAS/UWT)	116,000		6	
Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association (AMMA)	90,000		4	
National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)	21,000		2	
		270,000		15
Secondary Heads Association (SHA)	2,800		1	
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE)	0[a]		1	
Professional Association of Teachers (PAT)	21,000		1	

[a]NATFHE includes only teachers in further and higher education

Source: Adapted from Thorton (1982: 383)

A significant growth in the size of the national membership of the NAS since 1960 when it was not represented on the Burnham Committee to 1982 when it claimed to represent the majority of those teachers working in state secondary schools, can be seen to have taken place during the two years immediately following its acquisition of its initial Burnham representation. In the decade which followed, the association further enhanced its reputation for militancy, and for approaching local issues in ways which were significantly different from those adopted by other teachers' unions, and, during which it acquired a new and highly influential general secretary.

As can be seen from Table 2 the membership increased almost three fold during and immediately after the major struggle for Burnham representation. It doubled again in less than 10 years, partly as a result of the merger between the NAS and the UWT and partly through other factors which will be considered in the next section. The difference in the size of the NAS/UWT membership between 1979, (Table 2), and 1981, (Table I), arises, not from any dramatic decline in the popularity of the union but from the difficulties in establishing an accurate count of the actual membership. These difficulties will be discussed below with reference to local membership figures in Coventry. In spite of such difficulties it can be seen from Table 2 that the association's membership increased steadily from 1960 onwards. Its percentage increase over that period was far greater than that of trade union membership in the country as a whole. It was also significantly greater than its larger rival, the NUT, and it compared favourably with other public sector unions.

It can be seen then, that the continual concern to increase total membership, the struggle for representation on the Burnham Committee, and the central significance of the stance taken towards a common salary scale for all teachers formed the historical context within which the NAS developed both its structure and its identity. Its identity is a product of the relationship between its aims and purposes and the methods which have been selected to achieve those aims and purposes. Such methods tend to reflect assumptions about the nature of the membership as well as about resources, including support by members of different types of action. The structure also reflects assumptions about the availability of resources and the interests of the membership.

Table 2. Trends in Union Membership Figures in Great Britain 1960 - 1979

	NAS/UWT		NUT		NALGO		NUPE		Total Membership figures for U.K. in 000s	
	Membership Figure	% increase or decrease	Membership Figure	% increase or decrease	Membership Figure	% increase or decrease	Membership Figure	% increase or decrease	Membership Figure	% increase or decrease
1960	22,651		244,664		273,644		197,648		9,458	
1961	31,063	27.1	255,056	4.3	284,784	30.9	210,405	6.1	9,518	.32
1965	36,800	15.6	265,056	3.5	348,528	18.3	255,096	17.5	9,742	2.3
1968	40,002	8.0	293,886	9.8	373,046	6.6	283,471	10.8	10,200	2.6
1970	53,282*	16.2	342,235	7.7	439,887	15.2	372,709	23.9	10,628	4.0
1976	81,817*	34.9	292,761	-17.1	683,011	35.6	645,094	42.3	12,386	14.0
1977	96,791	15.5	296,092	1.1	709,331	3.7	686,735	6.0	12,283	- .8
1979	142,633*	32.1	289,311	- 2.3	753,226	5.8	684,101	- .3	13,447	8.7

Source: Figures supplied by G. S. Bain and R. J. Price from unpublished data used in preparation of Bain and Price (1980).

*Figures for both NAS and UWT. Prior to this figures are only available for the NAS.

Aims, Purposes and Methods

Clearly the central aims and purposes of the NAS/UWT developed directly from the historical context within which it came into being. Its forty year campaign to gain representation on the Burnham Committee resulted not only in a concern with membership statistics but a lasting reputation for militancy and a view of trade union activity which is different from that of other teachers' unions. The concern for the size of its membership has been discussed in the previous section. In order to attract members, however, the NAS had to offer something substantially different to potential members since it was excluded from the very body within which the most significant part of traditional trade union activity, the negotiations over pay, regularly took place. Thus, if historical circumstances dictated that the campaign to gain, and later to increase, representation on the Burnham Committee was the most significant aspect of the work of the NAS, its need to succeed both in this and in building its membership by being different, dictated the methods to be used.

To a large extent, therefore, historical circumstances resulted in the NAS earning a reputation for militancy. It was militant action which eventually ensured representation on Burnham. It was its more militant stances on many local as well as national issues which helped to attract the male teachers towards whom its membership drives were directed. Since it was excluded from negotiations, public militancy was one of the few acceptable alternatives. The reputation remained even after representation on Burnham had been achieved. This may be explained by three factors. Firstly the NAS and the UWT tended to recruit teachers

with relatively militant tendencies. The nature of the membership was not going to change once an objective had been achieved. Secondly a reputation once earned is, by the very nature of things, hard to change. This was especially true when, thirdly, the teachers' unions as a whole were becoming more willing to take collective action in support of a wide range of grievances (Burke, 1971).

Thus by its action up to and including 1961, the NAS acquired a reputation for militancy that was to persist to the present day. This was , no doubt, reinforced by the 9,000 new members who joined the association during the year following its success in gaining access to Burnham. It was not, however, able to repeat this success although it made two further attempts. In 1965 it threatened, and in 1969 it actually implemented strike action in support of its demand for an independent inquiry into teachers' pay (Burke,1971; Kogan,1974). The campaign in 1965 was discreetly abandoned in the face of government opposition. The struggle for the inquiry in 1969 ended with an inquiry into who should pay the striking teachers which was not quite the initial intention. Such an enquiry was eventually held in the middle of the next decade.

The prevailing view which the NAS/UWT appears to have of itself and which can be found expressed in its literature, especially its journal, The Schoolmaster and Career Teacher, is closely linked to and yet separate from the reputation for militancy which it enjoys amongst teachers' organizations. The NAS/UWT sees itself as a trade union for teachers, no more and no less. As will be seen in Chapter 4 the Guide to School Representatives (NAS/UWT. 1977a), which is issued

by the NAS/UWT to all its accredited representatives in schools leaves the reader in no doubt about the fact that the organization is first and foremost a trade union with the primary role of representing its members and protecting their interests. In contrast to this the NUT, for example, sees itself as a trade union, a professional body and a promotional body with political, educational and social attitudes towards the education service (Kogan,1974). Its School Representatives' Handbook (NUT,1982), contains little indication that the school representative may have a major part to play as a shop steward in the way that the NAS/UWT expects that its work place representatives will do. In being singlemindedly a trade union, the NAS/UWT does not believe that it is or should be the guardian of educational or professional standards. It believes that politicians should accept responsibility for the former whilst the latter ought to be the province of a teachers' council (Kogan,1974). Thus the NAS/UWT has, in this one sense at least, taken a very narrow view of what its activities should be, of where its members interests lie, and how they may best be served. Its aims and its methods are quite specific and closely related. It certainly does not see itself as a national forum for commentary on economic, social or political affairs generally, or even for educational affairs in particular. As will be seen below, this approach to trade unionism was shared at local level. The overall activities of the NAS/UWT and its established priorities have, therefore, combined to produce an organization which is somewhat different from other teachers' unions.

This difference is also apparent in another, strangely paradoxical way since, far from not having a coherent set of views on education, the NAS/UWT has a very specific highly developed and sharply critical approach to the conventional wisdom to be found within the educational world. Whilst enjoying a reputation for militant action the NAS/UWT is also quite conservative, some might say reactionary, in its views

on many matters educational (Locke,1974). Such attitudes are always closely related to the interests of the members. Thus when the NAS/UWT opposed the raising of the school leaving age, it did so from the conviction that resources, especially extra buildings, were not going to be available in time and that, therefore, its members may be placed in a situation in which they would not have the necessary equipment, space and staff to introduce the change without undue strain on them and their schools.

The NAS/UWT has repeatedly argued that violence and disruption are increasing in schools but this view should not be assumed to be a concern with social or even educational standards. The NAS/UWT's sole concern is with the effect that such an increase may be having on its members. These views on violence and disruption in schools have been developed over almost a decade of press releases, conference motions and articles in the association's journal. As part of this process the association commissioned research on the causes and consequences of stress in schools. It repeatedly calls for the establishing of withdrawal of difficult pupils to special centres, another interesting juxtaposition of the conservative and the radical in NAS/UWT thinking. Not only does the NAS/UWT advocate the withdrawal of disruptive pupils but it is always prepared to take legal action on behalf of teachers who have been assulted whilst, at the same time, absolving teachers and schools of responsibility for badly behaved pupils (Conference Report, No.3:1977). The NAS/UWT also believes in protecting its members from parents who undermine their authority, verbally abuse them or even physically attack them (Schoolmaster and Career Teacher, May 1977:41). The NAS/UWT is thus aiming to protect its members from the violence which it claims to have identified in schools, from

violence outside the school which may be related to the situation inside school, and from the charge that teachers may have some responsibility for such a situation.

It is also part of NAS/UWT policy to draw a clear distinction between those activities for which a teacher may be held to be contractually responsible and those which are undertaken voluntarily and which, therefore, can be with-held at will. This policy is regularly reflected in a variety of conference motions about not covering for absent colleagues, out of school activities and 'overtime remuneration for teachers' (Conference Motions,1977). Local associations have been instructed to obtain a firm guarantee about the voluntary nature of out of school activities. Refusal to perform such activities and to cover for colleagues not in school have become part of the repertoire of industrial action to be employed in schools. They have the virtue of causing a minimum amount of disruption to the education of school children while causing significant disturbance in the running of schools and, at the same time, providing members with the feeling of participating in events.

No cover action and the banning of out of school activities have been used by the NAS/UWT to protest against the gradual erosion of pay differentials. This concern with pay differentials is part of the more general focusing of NAS/UWT policy on career teachers, the origins of which were discussed in the previous section. In its pamphlet aimed at students and new teachers, the emphasis in the association's pay policy is made quite clear when it states that the association does not believe that the starting salary is the most important part of the scale, nor will it hazzard the long term interests of career teachers in a propagandist bid for the support of those

young teachers who cannot see beyond the first few years. This policy is broadened to a general opposition by the NAS/UWT within the teachers' panel of the Burnham Committee to the pursuing of flat rate pay increases which tend to favour newer entrants to teaching at the expense of the career teacher (Schoolmaster and Carcer Teacher, May 1977:37). The NAS/UWT also takes a similar stance on this issue within the TUC (Conference Report, No.4, May 1976).

The NAS/UWT's ability and willingness to develop such specific policies on educational matters and still to regard itself as purely and simply a trade union owes much to the homogeneous nature of its membership which, in turn, is a product of a combination of historical circumstances, deliberate recruitment and the extent to which the officers of the NAS/UWT operate with a clear notion of how the members will be likely to perceive their interests in any given situation. The historical circumstances have been discussed above. The need to approach trade union activity in such a way as to be seen to be different from other teachers' unions, to recruit career teachers and to take a stance on pay which was in keeping with its own traditions have all been significant factors in shaping the NAS/UWT's aims and purposes and the strategies adopted for achieving them. Unlike the NUT, a much larger union drawing its membership from across the whole spectrum of political and educational opinion, the NAS/UWT appeal is much more restricted. It does not have to cope with the politically radical young teachers like those who formed the NUT's 'Rank and File' movement, (Locke,1974). Nor does it, at the same time, have to encompass what Manzer,1970, has called,

> a powerful conservative influence on the politics of English education...explained by the Union's traditional professional concern for the education of the individual, its refusal to sacrifice longstanding educational ideals, the distractions caused by the divisions inside the profession (Manzer, 1970 : 158).

The NUT is far more likely to find itself having to face both ways on any particular issue than is the NAS/UWT. As a result the NUT may be less willing to act or even adopt a specific position on any issue in order to avoid antagonising a section of its membership (Roy,1964). The NAS/UWT is much less likely to find itself in this situation. It is less likely than the NUT to be acting for, say, both a head and a teacher on the same issue and, therefore, having to negotiate for both parties in a local dispute. The NAS/UWT can thus afford to adopt a much tougher negotiating style than that of the NUT in most circumstances.

The relative homogeneity of the NAS/UWT enabled it to move from its stance of opposition to equal pay and to substitute the concept of the career teacher with some considerable success if its membership figures, which have steadily increased, are any indication. In this, as in many other situations, the NAS/UWT officers seem to have a clear idea about what the membership will regard as appropriate in the particular circumstances. This capacity is also found at local level. It is based on a sound understanding of the nature of the image which the NAS/UWT wishes to present and, indeed does present, to potential members. It is also based on the assumption that the general interests of its members are very similar and that, therefore, these interests cannot only be articulated clearly and specifically by the association but that the same interests provide a firm foundation for action. The aims of the NAS/UWT are thus firmly based on a view of members interests. The methods adopted to achieve those aims reflect the interests and a set of attitudes held in common by the members. These attitudes, together with the aims, purposes and methods which they underpin are articulated through the structure of the association and through the actions of its officers.

The National Structure of the NAS/UWT

The structure of the NAS/UWT is, in many ways, like its membership, relatively small and closely knit. It is, in fact, so simple that no description is given of it in the Guide for School Representatives, (NAS/UWT,1977a), unlike that of the NUT which runs to several pages. The association has an executive committee which is elected at the annual conference, and a full time senior staff of four, the most important of whom is the General Secretary, Terry Casey. The members of the executive who represent regional constituencies are expected to liaise with the local associations in their regional area and to play an active role in some disputes. Much depends, however, on the way in which the local association regards its regional executive member. He can be excluded from much local activity by the local executive or branch. The local organization is a matter for each local association but it normally consists of a branch at whose meetings the main business is conducted, together with a local executive of, at least, a president, treasurer and secretary. The division of responsibility between the local and the national parts of the organization is set out clearly in the Guide to School Representatives but is often honoured in the breach. The regional national executive member, the only vestige of a regional organization, tends to act only as an advisor and an avenue of communication between the local and the national organization.

The national executive committee meets only six times a year compared with the fortnightly meetings of the NUT's executive (Pollard,1974). This is significant since the less frequent meetings enable the general secretary to take responsibility for much of the daily running of the association. Thus tactical decisions tend to

be in the hands of Terry Casey unlike the situation which prevails in the NUT where the executive often calls its officials to account for what they have said and done, and where the officials can be faced with a number of opposing, not to say competing, interest groups within the executive. The impact of the chief permanent official is obvious in the firm policy line which the NAS/UWT pursues for, although he must have the support and agreement of his executive, Casey believes in giving them strong, unequivocal advice (NAS/UWT,1976b). He has thus been able to dominate the policies of the association since his appointment in 1963 but this has only been achieved by consolidating many of the gains made prior to his appointment and by continuing to present the NAS/UWT as a united body with clear objectives and a policy of its own.

Casey was fortunate in that he was able to organize support for NAS/UWT policies from respected bodies outside education such as the Economic Intelligence Unit which backed the association's position on pay (Pollard,1974). He also tended to present himself as the NAS/UWT's major, if not only, spokesman when the association is in dispute. The simple organization of the NAS/UWT allows him to do this even where, as in the celebrated 'tea cosy' case in which an appointment for a scale post was allegedly made by drawing names out of a tea cosy,, the dispute is essentially local. In the NUT such a case might have involved not only local representatives but members of divisional and regional bodies as well as the national executive.

The development of clear and direct policies as well as Casey's avowed policy of maintaining close contacts with the local associations is a deliberate attempt to overcome the problems related to having a

relatively remote national executive (NAS/UWT,1976b). The reactions of local officers in Coventry to what they regarded as an increasing concern on Casey's part with matters which neither directly affected members' interests nor fell within the boundaries of what they regarded as appropriate activity for their general secretary show that at local level there exists the expectation that officers of the national body will maintain close contact, albeit on terms dictated by local officers (NAS/UWT,1976b).

This concern with the remoteness of national union officials is not confined to the NAS/UWT or to teachers' unions in general. It has been noted that the National Union of Public Employees, (NUPE), a large, rapidly expanding organization whose members are subject to national agreements similar to those which determine teachers' salaries, has had to confront this same problem (Fryer, Fairclough and Manson,1974). Its organization also placed emphasis on the activities of the branch although its regional structure was more developed than that of the NAS/UWT, providing a supportive base for action rather than merely an avenue of communication as in the NAS/UWT. It sought to tackle the isolation and remoteness problems by holding regular workplace meetings. In the NAS/UWT the local initiative taken to overcome poor attendance at local association meetings in Coventry also concentrated on providing greater workplace representation.

Both these unions, in common with almost all others, acknowledge the importance of the relationship between the national and its local branches. It has been suggested, (Boraston, Clegg and Rimmer,1975), that in most unions the relationship between the local branch and the

and the national organization will be classified as dependent, co-operative or independent and that, although co-operation may be found in most situations, the main distinction was between dependence and independence. The extent to which this relationship can be so categorised within the NAS/UWT will be considered in Chapter 6. The degree to which the explicitly trade union stance and the specific approaches to issues which emanate from national headquarters actually inform branch and workplace activity will also be considered there and in Chapter 4. In an organization with such clear aims, distinctive methods and simple structure, however, it would be reasonable to expect that local associations, in their turn, might also reflect the concerns and the methods adopted at national level.

Trade Union Activity and the NAS/UWT

From its foundation the NAS/UWT has had a well ordered set of priorities which have included gaining Burnham representation, increasing its membership and furthering the interests of its career teacher members through a general concern for their perceived interests, and a pursuit of particular policies designed to improve or protect their position. The methods selected to further such ends were, like the policies themselves, influenced by their historical context as well as by the nature of the membership of the association. Since the NAS was excluded from the main arena of wage bargaining, it was forced to develop practices which were related to wages only in the broadest sense and which concentrated on conditions of service at local levels where there was scope for negotiation with individual LEAs and schools. In so doing the association was often critical of the nature, structure and content of the education service but, it maintained, only from the point of view of identifying areas which were of concern to its members or which might threaten their interests in some way.

The NAS also had to develop a militant stance in order to achieve the representation which it wanted on the Burnham Committee. It was forced to recognise the virtues of action and the necessity of basing such action on a collectivist position which was based on a clear sense of who its members were, who its potential and, indeed, desired recruits would be, and how their collective interests might best be served. The association, once it gained access to Burnham, was quite prepared to bargain on behalf of career teachers even if this meant that other groups within the labour force might be disadvantaged in negotiations and the the rewards they might receive. The NAS/UWT became more than a group of workers who had banded together to improve the conditions of their working lives (Webb,1924). It developed into an association which had to recognise that bargaining meant more than wage bargaining in the market place, since it was excluded from that market place. It also came to see that in furthering the interests of its own members, those of other teachers might be threatened. In striving to obtain the best terms for its own members the NAS/UWT was prepared to sacrifice the well being of the members of other teachers' unions if this should be necessary.

How far can this be seen as real collectivism in the sense that it is normally defined within the trade union movement? In any trade union the primary responsibility of the leaders, from the point of view of the members, is that the interests of those members are to be protected. In order to do this the union has to act collectively. That is, individuals have to submerge their individual interests in the collective aspirations of the union and, at the same time, recognise that unity and solidarity rather than individualism and sectionalism provide the means by which individual ends may be achieved.

Such a philosophy is often associated with a conflict view of the world in which society is made up of two interacting social classes with different power. Conflict over the distribution of rewards and facilities form the basis of the relationship between the classes. Collective ends and collective action are seen by trade unions as their dominant mode of ascent through the social hierarchy (Bain, Coates and Ellis,1973). It is clear that, at national level at least, the NAS/UWT does, with some regularity, espouse the means which are inherent in collectivism. Its relatively conservative stance on many issues and its willingness to establish what Locke,(1974:-20), has described as accommodatory working relationships with the DES and with LEAS when this appeared to be in the best interests of its members, raises doubts as to how far the NAS/UWT shares the conflict view of the world on which much collectivism is thought to rest. Its willingness to work with management as well as its use of militant tactics where necessary, appears to indicate that the NAS/UWT views the nature of collective bargaining in a wider sense than merely market place haggling over pay and conditions.

The need of the NAS/UWT to further its members interests in a situation in which the association has been forced to cope with circumstances which were a product of its own history as well as having, on the whole, to react to the initiatives from management in most spheres of its activity rather than being able to take the initiative itself, has resulted in the development of a form of collective action which minimises the market place elements of the situation and recognises that, as Flanders,(1970), has suggested, bargaining is essentially a power relationship between organizations. In such a situation each party will seek to establish structures and adopt

tactics which will minimise the extent to which it will incur costs itself, while, at the same time, enabling it to exert the maximum influence on other parties. It may be that this would require co-operation with management instead of conflict but the NAS/UWT appears to keep its options open. The factors which help to determine how the relative choices and decisions are made will be examined in the local context in the following chapters.

At national level it can be seen that one form of activity, collective action, is the product of one type of social imagery. Another form of social imagery is closely associated with the concept of career teacher which plays such a significant part in the NAS/UWT's view of itself and the image which it wishes to present to the world at large. A career teacher is not only a member of a trade union, he is also a member of the teaching profession. As Ginsberg,(1980), has pointed out, most teachers regard professionalism and trade unionism as somewhat conflicting phenomena, although Deem(1976), has shown in a study of 103 teachers that professionalism and militant action may occur in the same occupation. Deem and Ginsberg adopt a definition of professionalism based on the extent to which the particular occupational group fulfils a number of criteria such as a body of theoretical knowledge on which practitioner skills are based; a lengthy period of training; a primary concern for the welfare of the client; a degree of autonomy as a profession and as an individual practitioner; and a code of ethics governing relationships with the client (Hoyle and MacCormick,1976). Such criteria were very similar to the claims made by craft unions over their own right to protect their skills, control the nature of apprenticeships and entry to the craft. In fact most obervers would claim that teachers as a body do not fulfil these criteria completely and that, therefore, they should be regarded as a 'semi-profession' (Etzioni,1972).

Many organized groups of teachers, including the NAS/UWT see professionalism as an important part of their occupational identity (Tropp,1959; Coates,1972). Much of this importance rests on claims to autonomy, participation and involvement in areas of educational activity. At the same time it involves attempts to exclude other parties, including employers, from such areas of activity. Thus, as Johnson,(1972), has argued, the extent to which any group fulfils criteria which purport to indicate professionality is, at best, irrelevant and, at worst, misleading since the crucial issue is how the claim to professional status is used and received within the relevant areas of activity. Thus for the NAS/UWT such concerns with the professional status of career teachers are not inconsistent with the association's approach to trade unionism. Using the language of professionalism for the NAS/UWT forms part of the process of justifying and explaining whatever action may be regarded as necessary to protect and further the interests of the members of the association. In this way, then, the NAS/UWT can be seen to be behaving in the same way as any other trade union in that it seeks to maximise whatever resources it may have. Thus when its actions are justified and explained in terms of a variety of sets of social imagery, the association is deliberately using justifications which, it believes, will be regarded as appropriate by, and acceptable to, its members.

Conclusion

The inter-relationship between the structure of the union, the nature of trade union activity and the ways in which such activities are justified on the part of the NAS/UWT is extremely complex. It will be examined in some detail with particular reference to local activities in Chapters 8 and 9. It has been argued here that at the

national level the complex nature of that relationship has its origins in the historical context within which the NAS came into being. The context and the very act of creating the NAS by the group of teachers who left the NUT at that time was instrumental in thrusting certain specific issues and concerns into the forefront of NAS activity.

The association's attempts to cope with the problems posed by being excluded from the main arena of wage bargaining and by being a small, breakaway union which had to establish its own identity and recruit a significant membership, forced it to adopt a series of strategies from a very limited range of options. In so doing the association gained a reputation for militant action and foreful negotiation. At the same time, because of the relatively narrow definition of appropriate union activity which prevails in the NAS/UWT, and its reluctance to take a broadly based educational, rather than a narrowly based sectional view of its own activities and its members' interests, it has also acquired a reputation for educational conservatism. In practice this conservatism is based on a fairly rigid interpretation of both its own role and its members' interests rather than on a social, political or even an educational position.

The relatively simple organizational structure enables the permanent officials, especially the general secretary, to play a major role in national activities and, from his viewpoint at least, to be influential at local level as well. There does appear to be a close relationship between the national and local perceptions on interest and the appropriateness or otherwise of particular activities. This stems from a very clear public and private

identity based on the concept of the career teacher upon which much NAS/UWT concern is focused and to the protection of whose interests much NAS/UWT activity is constantly directed.

As a result of this clear identity it is possible for the association to be specific about where its members' interests are to be located and to be clear about how those interests might best be protected and furthered. The NAS/UWT has, therefore, found itself, at times, co-operating with management rather than being in conflict with employers. It has found itself using the language of individualism as opposed to the language of collectivism to explain and justify its actions. In all this it has behaved no differently from any other union. If it differs from other unions it is only in the extent to which it has different and, perhaps, clearer preceptions of its own best interests and how to achieve them. As will be seen in the following chapters, however, much of its branch level activity is similar to that of other unions. It may be that some of the justifications for those activities are different but many of the constraints which circumscribe union activity at the branch level in the Coventry NAS/UWT are very similar to those experienced elsewhere and many of the features of the national association may be found in modified form at the local level.

CHAPTER THREE

THE COVENTRY NAS/UWT

Introduction

In Chapter 2 it was shown how the NAS and later the NAS/UWT was forced by historical circumstances to adopt strategies and tactics which, hitherto, had not normally been acceptable to teachers' unions in their negotiations with LEAs and the DES. Such a departure from usual practice was, to a large extent, the result of the NAS being excluded from the Burnham Committee. This exclusion from the main arena of negotiation led the NAS to embrace more militant approaches to industrial relations than had been witnessed in the educational world before. It also encouraged the association to develop a vigorous recruitment policy on the basis of a clear notion of what it, the NAS, stood for in terms of the interests of its members. The policy on which such recruitment was based, gradually shifted from an outright opposition to equal pay for women teachers, to a demand for a salary structure which favoured the long serving teachers who were, co-incidentally, more likely than not to be male. This policy served to give the NAS/UWT a well formulated and coherent view of who its members were and how these members were likely to perceive their own interests.

The NAS/UWT thus found itself in a position where it could adopt militant approaches to issues and be fairly secure in the knowledge that the desired support would be forthcoming from the rank-and-file. This applied equally to the militant campaigns which were conducted as part of the successful attempt to gain representation on the Burnham Committee and to the whole range of issues which the NAS/UWT identified at local level. Because of the homogeneous nature of the

membership the new and extremely influential general secretary of the NAS could, from the early 1960s, claim to speak for his membership on both local and national issues, relatively secure in the knowledge that he was neither going to be contradicted by an irate member of his national executive or by a disaffected faction within the local association. The NAS/UWT was, therefore, able to develop an approach to both local and national issues which was significantly different from that of other teachers' unions.

As this approach developed, and the policy on which it was based became more clearly and more regularly articulated through the national media, local acitivities and the educational press, so the membership of the NAS grew. Its sister body and its later partner in merger, the UWT was founded and, whilst it, like many other teachers' unions, never grew very large, it did, under the care and protection of its brother union, become an established part of the growing group of teachers' unions. This growth in membership meant, obviously, that many local associations of the NAS were established, and could be seen to be expanding. Clearly many local associations benefited from the improved national standing of the NAS once it had gained access to Burnham and continued to benefit from the regular influx of members. The Coventry association of the NAS/UWT was one such local group that flourished at this period.

Growth and Development of the Coventry NAS/UWT

During that period of its history in which the NAS established its reputation for militancy, it acquired a new and extremely effective general secretary, and developed approaches to local

and national issues which were significantly different from those of other teachers' unions at that time. These same factors which were influential in producing the national growth in membership were also operating to produce a similar and related growth in the Coventry based local association of the NAS.

The impact of the development of the NAS was, perhaps, greater in the Coventry area than the figures in Table 3 might indicate. The Coventry based NAS originally represented teachers throughout Warwickshire and, in so doing, was attempting to develop relationships with at least three LEAs; Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull. Solihull rapidly became a part of a separate organization but this still left Coventry and Warwickshire which was divided into four administrative areas each of which organized its educational provision in a different way. As late as the early 1980s, selection at age 11 , and grammar schools could be found in the Southern area of Warwickshire, whilst the other three areas had established policies of comprehensive education. Middle and first schools form the bulk of the pre-secondary school provision throughout Warwickshire but one area retains the older infant and primary split with children transferring schools at eleven rather than twelve as elsewhere in the county. Even before such changes were introduced, Warwickshire was a widely spread, rural authority with distinct administrative centres for each of its four regions. It operated a structure which was based on small high schools and a few selective grammar schools. Dealing with such a widely spread authority on its own would have taxed the resources of such a small group as the Coventry based NAS.

Table 3. Membership claimed by the Coventry NAS/UWT

Year	Membership Claimed
1950	50
1955	126
1960	197
1961	241
1965	239
1970	390
1976	420
1977	650
1980	780

Source: NAS/UWT (1980)

In contrast to Warwickshire, Coventry was a compact LEA with a firmly established policy of comprehensive schools and a transfer age at 11. Most of these schools were large, although there were, for a time, a number of smaller secondary schools which were in the process of being replaced by purpose built comprehensive schools. There were a very small number of grammar schools which were either independently financed or in the process of being transformed into comprehensive schools. At the same time the number of schools was contracting. In 1960 there were 32 secondary schools in Coventry, (Local Education Authorities Directory, 1960). By 1977 there were only 22, (Local Education Authorities Directory, 1977), and of these four were special schools of some kind. Even if the NAS had only this authority with which to negotiate, it would have found its resources hardly sufficient. The Coventry based NAS recognised this problem from the outset.

The emerging NAS, therefore, was faced with a situation in which it was short of resources, especially numbers of members, and yet had to deal with an extremely complex set of relationships which involved two major and, in some ways, a number of minor employers. As its membership increased the local association developed the policy of establishing independent local associations in other parts of Warwickshire until, by 1976, it had been instrumental in founding all of the other local associations of the NAS in Warwickshire, except the Nuneaton one which was a separate body in its own right. The need to respond to employers in places such as Leamington Spa, Bedworth and South Warwickshire, all of whom had different administrative structures as well as different policies, led to this establishment of many other local associations, (NAS/UWT,1977d). By 1977 the Coventry NAS/UWT was dealing with a single employer, Coventry LEA, and was no longer involved in any activities of a purely local nature outside the LEA boundaries.

The Coventry NAS/UWT had, by the mid-nineteen seventies, an organization which was coterminous with that of the local education authority by which its members were employed. This LEA was notable for its policy-making. It had been one of the very early authorities to pursue an ambitious programme of comprehensive re-organization based on purpose built schools. This had involved the closure of many small secondary schools, resulting in problems of re-deployment and selection for a far fewer number of senior posts. The unions had all been heavily involved in casework and other forms of negotiation as a result of this. In the late 1960s the LEA, under a new Director of Education, embarked on the establishment of urban community schools and colleges. This required, for some teachers,

a significant change in working conditions which, again, led to union involvement in educational policy decisions. Thus all of the teachers' unions in Coventry, including the NAS/UWT were and, indeed, still are regularly dealing with a local education authority with a clear and coherent set of educational policies. As a result the unions are constantly brought into contact with the LEA and those policies which it is pursuing. It is fortunate, therefore, that the growth which occurred in NAS/UWT numbers enabled it to create a situation in which it could concentrate its activities on representing the interests of those members who were employed by that authority. The Coventry NAS/UWT was thus able to acquire a style of negotiation which was derived from its local situation. This style reflected the nature of the employer with which it had to negotiate. It was also based upon a clear perception of the interests of its members and on an understanding of the nature of the activities through which those interests might best be represented.

In spite of the establishment of other local associations and the consequent loss in membership, the Coventry NAS gradually increased in size. Table 3 shows that its recruitment, like that of most of the rest of the NAS, received an impetus after the national association had obtained representation on Burnham. Recruitment slowed down during the relatively unsuccessful period of militancy which followed the campaign to gain access to Burnham, but this appears to have been a minor set back. The figures in Table 3 are, at best, approximate, since they are based on one of four financial criteria rather than on an actual count of members, (NAS/UWT,1977d).

These figures are an interesting example of the general difficulties experienced in the collection of trade union membership statistics, (Bain and Price, 1980).

Until 1963 the size of membership of the Coventry NAS was calculated by dividing the total sum of money received in subscriptions by the local association treasurer by the amount of the subscription. This simple and error-free process was changed in 1963. At that time the method for paying subscriptions changed from a locally based to a nationally based system. Subscriptions were now to be paid directly to national headquarters in an attempt to keep a closer check on the overall membership figures. Local membership was estimated by the local treasurer on the basis of the money received from headquarters which, whilst perhaps more satisfactory from a national point of view, was far less accurate at local level. By 1965 membership was being calculated on the basis of affiliation fees paid to the benevolent fund. From 1970 onwards the local treasurer, still faced with national payment of subscriptions and with direct debit becoming the preferred method of payment, had yet another way of arriving at a local membership figure. He calculated the local membership by dividing the total local federation fee which he received from headquarters by a single federation fee. The problem with all of these figures arrived at by simple mathematics is that the answer depends upon when the calculation is carried out relative to when the fees are actually paid. These figures, therefore, are only approximate and they are not strictly comparable.

The problems involved in calculating the local membership figures for the Coventry NAS/UWT are increased because it, like most other employee organizations, is not static in character or function.

Members tend to move from area to area. This makes keeping track of current members who are less than punctual in paying fees extremely difficult. Frequently the time which can elapse between the collection of membership information by the national headquarters through say, membership subscriptions paid, and the transmission of this information to the local association can have two effects. It can render the membership statistic out of date by overstating them if membership is decreasing and understating them when the move is in the reverse direction. In either case, figures which are not accurate provide an unsatisfactory basis upon which to base claims for resources including levels of representation on local and regional committees which depend upon the size of the local membership. Inaccurate membership figures can, and do cause some difficulties for the Coventry NAS/UWT. Facilities for union officers, including time during working hours to attend to union matters, as well as local committee membership depends on the size of the local membership. There are even times when claims for support from local officers are made by people whose membership status is, at best, dubious (see Chapter 7).

Until recently teachers have been a highly mobile section of the labour force. The problems experienced by the Coventry NAS/UWT treasurer in producing accurate membership figures and in keeping track of the workplace location of his local members is, to a large extent, a function of this mobility enjoyed by teachers in pursuit of their occupation. At the same time it is not always possible to be precise about the definition of 'union member' (Bain and Price, 1980). Some unions, for example, define members as those who have paid their subscriptions. Others include all of

those who paid in the previous financial year and who might reasonably be expected to pay in the current year. This course is the one followed by the NAS/UWT at national level but the local level figures, because of the strictly financial income basis on which they are calculated, include only those members who have paid their subscription. The national office of the NAS/UWT argues that the centralization of subscription payments provides a speedier and more accurate set of membership figures than could the old local collection process (NAS/UWT, 1977d). For the local associations, however, the centralized processes has made it difficult to identify their membership accurately and it has meant that the role of the local treasurer changed from collecting all subscriptions to attempting to keep accurate local records of a dispersed and mobile membership.

In spite of the difficulties experienced in obtaining reliable membership figures for the local association, there can be little doubt that the Coventry NAS/UWT increased in size as the fortunes of the national body improved. The membership figures in Coventry received a further boost in the 1976-1977 period following the merger between the NAS and the UWT. As at national level, it was recognised in Coventry that both parties to the merger had something to offer the other and that the merger ought to be mutually beneficial. The relationships between the two organizations in Coventry had been as close as they had been nationally. As a result merger, rather than, as Turner,(1964), has argued, federation appeared to be the ideal solution to the problem of how to build upon the close relationships which already existed between the two groups.

The merger did, however, create both problems and opportunities for the newly formed organization. It was necessary to ensure that the numerically smaller UWT did not lose its voice in the running of the organization and that it had some form of representation on the executive. It was also necessary to ensure that the extra numbers did not impair the administrative efficiency of the local association to the extent that it was no longer able to represent the interests of its members effectively. As so often in trade union government, therefore, the two issues, administrative efficiency and representation are to be found in one situation. The officers of the Coventry NAS/UWT, recognizing the difficulties which might confront them, saw the NAS/UWT merger as an opportunity to make some necessary and significant changes in the structure of the local association.

The Structure of the Coventry NAS/UWT

Prior to the NAS/UWT merger the Coventry NAS had tended to operate through monthly general meetings which was the accepted forum at which members put their views to their officers and at which the elections for the officer posts took place annually. The other standard avenue of representation was from the member to the workplace representative, the school representative. The school representative might then seek further advice from an officer, usually the local secretary. Alternatively the individual member might go straight to one of the officers on his own initiative but this was relatively rare, probably because few of the newer members had any real opportunity to meet the officers.

Attendance at the regular general meetings was normally very small, rarely reaching 4% of the total membership (NAS/UWT,1976c). As the membership increased so did the concerns over the extent to which the local executive committee, a small group of six officers, could effectively represent or could even legitimately claim to represent the growing membership.

As the amalgamation with the UWT approached,the NAS officers in Coventry recognised that, with the continuing decline in attendance at the monthly general meetings, these meetings were becoming entirely unrepresentative of the membership (NAS/UWT,1976c). Alternative structures were explored with the officers of the UWT and it was agreed that the amalgamation which was to take place during the 1976-1977 academic year would present an ideal opportunity to introduce a new structure to the local organization. This would be designed to increase the representativeness of the main meeting of the local association and to enable members to have more direct individual contact with their officers as well as more indirect contact with those officers through their school representatives. At the same time the need to protect the interests of the former UWT members would also be recognized.

The new constitution, which came into effect in September 1976, changed the name of the organization to the Coventry Association of Schoolteachers and, at the same time, drastically changed the formal structure of the local association (see Appendix C). The Executive was enlarged. It was now to include ten officers and a variety of other members elected in different ways in order to ensure that the eventual mix of the executive was as representative of the rank-and-file as it could be. The newly enlarged executive was to

include, in addition to the officers, 16 members who were elected by a secret ballot of all members. Of these, at least eight had to come from schools with less than ten members. In the context of the Coventry local association this tended to mean primary schools. This was seen as a safeguard for the UWT since many of its members were in small primary schools. At the same time the members in all those schools in which there were ten or more members could nominate one additional member of the executive committee from their membership NAS/UWT,1976f). It was expected that this extra member would be the school representative. This, it was hoped, would be a step towards training the school representatives and would also provide an additional line of communication between members and officers through the school representative. The executive was also given the power to co-opt additional members and was, according to the constitution, bound to use these powers to ensure that there should always be a minimum of six men and six women serving on the executive committee. Again this was to provide protection for the UWT since it was conceivable that, in a male dominated organization, six women would not be elected on to the executive.

At the same time as these changes were being made, the role of the executive committee within the local association was changed. The monthly meeting of the local association was discontinued. It was to be replaced with monthly executive committee meetings and a termly meet of the local association. At the same time the officers would also meet regularly on a monthly basis. The executive meeting, in its enlarged form, would now become the main vehicle for representing members' views, considering officers' actions, passing and receiving information, and discussing policy.

In effect, these changes were an attempt to legitimize the existing power structure by broadening the basis of representation, increasing opportunities for participation, and re-structuring the arena within which debates about the nature of trade union activity took place in the Coventry NAS/UWT. The changes were not an attempt to shift the location of power within the local association except in so far as certain arrangements were made for those members in small schools, for members of the UWT and for members with a large workplace organization. These changes were, therefore, simply an attempt to make the Coventry NAS/UWT more representative rather than a serious attempt to change the nature of that representation and with it the internal power structure and decision-making processes within the association.

The process of enlarging the executive did appear at least to prevent attendances falling below what they had been when the monthly general meeting was the main forum of representation. It can be argued that attendance was an improvement on that which had recently been obtained at general meetings since, as can be seen from Table 4, attendance rarely fell below 20; the quorum of 14 was always reached and, as can be seen in Appendix D, most members participated fully in the proceedings. At the same time the changed structure of participation did appear to result in a broadening of the basis of representation so that a larger number of schools were represented (NAS/UWT,1976c). Just how far attendance at executive meetings can be taken as a real indication of the general level of interest in the activities of the Coventry NAS/UWT is open to question. This will be discussed further in Chapter 6. It can be argued however, that a structure which permits adequate representation, participation and involvement is a necessary, if not a sufficient pre-requisite for stimulating and maintaining

interest in the activities of the local association. This, the Coventry NAS/UWT appeared to have created.

Table 4. Attendance and Apologies for Absence at Coventry NAS/UWT Executive Committee Meetings 1976-77.

Meeting	Apologies	Attendance
June	2	20
July	1	20
October	2	19
November	4	21
December	1	28
January	1	22
February	4	18
March	4	16
April	1	18
May	4	24
June	3	29
July	2	20

Source: NAS/UWT, 1976, f to j, 1977, h to n, p.

The Branch

Prior to the re-organization of the local association it could have been argued that, 'The branch is the key point of contact between members and union. To many it is the union '(Sayles and Strauss,1967:vii). It is doubtful, however, if it could ever have been said with certainty that the branch meetings enabled the members to hold their officers in check in the way that Nicholson, Ursell and Blyton (1981:181) claimed that the Sheffield branch of the

National Association of Local Government Officers,(NALGO), was able to do by the formal supremacy of the branch. Perhaps this was because of the relative smallness and the resultant fragmentation of the membership into small workplace groups. The much larger NUT retained its traditional organization based on branch meetings but its size, approximately 1750 members in Coventry at this time, (NUT,1983), two thirds of whom were in primary schools, meant that its members never felt as isolated as perhaps some of the NAS/UWT members felt in some schools. With its larger membership, its 12 officers and its 32 strong executive, 20 of whom are elected annually on a city wide ballot with no restrictions such as that imposed by the NAS/UWT, and its monthly general meetings at which attendance varies between 70 and 120, the NUT appears to be able to sustain this type of organization (NUT,1983).

The type of structure adopted by the NUT did enable the conflicting groups which Sayles and Strauss,(1967:24), identified in a local union to develop within the NUT. At least that is the view of the NUT which prevails outside that organization (Coventry LEA, 1983; NAS,1977e). The Coventry NAS/UWT had, like its national body, a much more homogeneous membership which, although scattered through a large number of workplaces, did present a relatively unified front on most issues as will be shown in Chapter 6, where the activities of the executive will be considered. This situation may, perhaps be attributed, in part, to the tendency of the Coventry NAS/UWT to reflect the practice of the national NAS/UWT to define the appropriate areas of trade union activity in a relatively narrow way and, therefore, to exclude a range of potentially divisive educational and political issues from regular consideration in a way that the NUT was not able to

do because of the nature of its membership (NUT,1983). At the same time the local association was able to develop a style of negotiation which reflected its own situation in dealing with its own LEA and which took into account the justifications of action which were acceptable to its local rank-and-file. It was able to 'defend the interests of its members without inhibition when it feels it to be necessary' (Kogan,1975:121). This was achieved through the emergence of significant officers in key positions rather than national stances permeating through to local roots although the national ethos is important. As will be shown in Chapter 6, however, the Coventry NAS/UWT modified this ethos to suit itself and its members. Like the growth and development of the Coventry NAS/UWT, its internal arrangements and the changes which were made to them were a response to its environment and the context within which the local association had to operate.

The concern of the officers of the NAS/UWT about the level of attendance at local association meetings was an indication that they attached importance to the extent to which those meetings could, legitimately,be said to represent the views of the rank-and-file. It also showed that, whether or not the actual distribution of power and influence within the local association was changed by the new arrangements, the same officers recognised that the processes by which they explained and justified their actions to the members and the processes by which the members might challenge and question those actions had to be seen to be as representative as possible. The existence of structures which facilitate representation cannot, of itself, guarantee that such structures will be used but their existence does, at least, provide opportunities for them to be used.

In NUPE there was a similar concern for providing appropriate structures for participation in the face of falling attendances at local branch meetings. Fryer, (1974), found that two thirds of the local branches reported that 5% or less of their membership attended branch meetings. This situation was very similar to that found in the Coventry NAS prior to the 1976 re-organization. Such situations have been explained by the continuing loss of authority on the part of the branch due to processes of centralization, (Webb, 1924), by which trade union business is no longer in the hands of the branch but located at either regional or national level because of the desire of trade unions to secure minimum conditions throughout each industry. On the other hand it has been argued that the decline in the importance of the branch is due at least in part, to the way in which shop stewards have been able to deal with negotiations which, in the past, might have been the concern of the local branch, (Clegg, 1970).

In the NAS/UWT there is no tradition of a strong and influential body of shop stewards although, as will be shown in the next chapter, attempts are being made to incorporate the shop steward function into the role of the school representative. Similarly Fryer, (1974), found within NUPE that the shop steward organization had recently been expanded to cope with the demands of a fragmented labour force. As a result, shop stewards were not very influential since they lacked trade union experience. It has been argued that only twenty or thirty members in every thousand attend their trade union branch meetings regularly, (Goldstein, 1952), and that one of the main reasons for this is not the processes of centralization or de-centralization which may both have produced situations in which branches have little of significance to consider but, rather, it is the relatively

tedious nature of branch level business itself together with the boringly routine approaches to such meetings. If this is the case then it might be expected that attendance or other significant indices of interest such as interaction between members and officers would increase when vital issues were being considered.

In the re-structured branch organization of the NAS/UWT, actions which members thought were vital to their interests together with those actions which could not successfully be justified to the membership by their officers combined to produce a higher than average attendance at executive meetings; an increase in member contact with the local secretary and, in one case in particular, an increase in the extent to which school representatives felt it necessary to put the views of their members in schools even where they disagreed with those views. Regular attendance at branch and other related meetings may not, therefore, be the only indicator of an interest in union activities. A willingness and an ability to use the available structures for participation as and when members felt it necessary may be equally important. This, in turn, may be influenced by the extent to which the officers of the union can be seen to share with their members a common perception of what is appropriate action for officers and a common definition of the interests of members. It will be argued below, that these two factors are of prime importance in determining members' and officers' actions and to their own participation and involvement in the day-to-day activities of their union.

The Functions of the Local Association

For the members of the Coventry local association of the NAS/UWT one of the issues raised by their local re-structuring concerned the nature of their local association and its activities. Goldstein,(1952), claimed that the branch is a two-way channel of communication between individual members and those serving at a higher level. To a certain extent this was true of the NAS/UWT. The local association distributed the Schoolmaster and Career Teacher as well as its own local bulletin which contained local and national information. It was also the forum through which Coventry was represented at regional federation and national conferences. The access which representatives of the larger union actually had to the re-structured executive was, as will be seen in Chapter 6, relatively restricted as was the use which the local officers and, more especially the local secretary made of the national facilities in his case work (Chapter 7). The local association did act as part of a communication network. This was, however, only a small part of its activities and, it can be argued, not the major aspect of its activity.

Arguments which suggest that the functions of local branches are only residual once national agreements have developed, or which present the branch as merely a broadcaster of information, tend to be the result of a perspective focused on national rather than local union activities. In the Coventry NAS/UWT the view from the branch is quite different. The officers do not see themselves as carrying out residual functions. The use which members made of the officers would also suggest that the rank-and-file regarded their local

association as having more than residual functions. Through its executives and its officers the Coventry local association appeared to have a relatively high degree of autonomy in determining what action it should take on issues given that it, like all other unions, was normally in a position of having to respond to employers' initiatives rather than being able to initiate action itself.

Clearly, however, much depends on the nature of the branch, its officers and members. The Coventry NAS/UWT shares with NUPE such characteristics as having a fledgling shop steward system which is neither fully developed nor fully incorporated into the local structure; being subject to nationally negotiated wage agreements; a relatively fragmented distribution of its membership and a structure which, as will be argued throughout this thesis, emphasises the importance of the local secretary and yet subjects him to certain constraints and influences. The local structure of the Coventry branch does appear, however, to be quite different from that of most other unions in the sense that the branch meeting can, no longer, be taken to represent the branch itself as it can in, for example, the NUT.

How then might the branch be identified? Boraston, Clegg and Rimmer, (1975), addressing the same question, concluded that the branch was not the local secretary, nor was it the workplace group. It has been argued here that the branch must be more than those who attend the branch meeting and, in the Coventry NAS/UWT, more than the members of the enlarged executive. Even though, as Chapter 7 will show, much of the work of the local association is carried out by the local secretary, he is accountable to his fellow officers and

to the wider constituency of his local membership. He is only part of the branch. It is through the processes by which the local secretary and his fellow officers are held to account by the ordinary executive members and by the rank-and-file member that these officers can legitimately claim to represent the local association. Whether approval for action is given pro-actively or retro-actively, it is given and it can be denied. Thus one of the main functions of the local structure of the Coventry NAS/UWT is to provide opportunities for members to participate directly in the processes of granting this legitimation to officers for their actions or, at least, to have an indirect part in those processes.

To the extent that, for example, a group of members recognize and acknowledge their dependence on the local secretary for advice on a particular matter, the secretary is acting as a representative of the local association. Since, in the Coventry NAS/UWT the local association meetings could, by 1976, no longer claim to be representative of the membership, if indeed they ever could, these meetings could not be thought of as the branch. In spite of efforts made to achieve a broad base of participation and representation, the enlarged executive could not be thought to include all ages, interest groups, subject teachers and types of schools in which members could find themselves. To this extent it cannot be representative. Not even the school representatives whose role will be discussed in Chapter 4 would claim to be able to represent the local branch or even, in some cases, their constituents in the workplace.

It can be argued, therefore, that the definition of a branch or local association is rooted in the context of its social useage within a particular union. The social context of the Coventry NAS/UWT and the nature of participation which is a product of that context has led members of that local association to develop a structure which appears to fit the demands of the situation as they see it. This structure is different from that of the Coventry NUT, from NUPE, and from NALGO. Thus the branch identified with those actions carried out in the name of branch members. Such actions may have received the active support of the members or, simply, may not have been challenged by them. Equally it may have been the case that the relevant justifications provided were couched in an acceptable form and in appropriate language. Thus it is possible to move towards a definition of the branch and its activities which argues that the branch can be identified by observing the activities of those who claim to represent the branch, examining the extent to which such claims are legitimated by the other members of the branch, and analysing the processes through which such legitimation is granted or denied.

The local association of the NAS/UWT in Coventry, therefore, is concerned with the ways in which actions carried out in its name are determined and legitimated. The local association is, thus, more than a stage in the transmission of information from the national union to the individual members. It is more than a constituency for holding elections for local or national office. It is more than its general meeting with its low attendances. It consists of a complex relationship between officers, executive members, school representatives and the rank-and-file through which actions are determined, implemented,

legitimized and challenged. The structure of the local association provides a framework within which these activities take place but, it will be argued, the issues which face the local association and its members, together with the extent to which those activities are recognized as appropriate by those members, will be influential in determining the degree to which members of the local association participate in its activities.

The focus of branch activity, when viewed from this perspective, shifts away from passing on communications to and from the centre to the members. It also goes beyond those structural arrangements which are made for the selection and election of officers. It even goes beyond the avenues through which officers of the branch seek to represent the views of their members. The focus of branch activity becomes a series of processes which are internal to the branch but which influence much, if not all, of the activities of the branch whether those activities relate to the members, the employers, other unions or the wider union of which the branch is a part. It is through the processes of justification, explanation and the conferring of legitimation that relationships between the Coventry NAS/UWT and other groups, including the national NAS/UWT, are shaped and influenced.

Workplace,Local Association and Union

The structural changes which took place at the time of the merger between the NAS and the UWT in Coventry focused on the ways in which those processes internal to the organization were conducted although the same processes were important in determining the nature of the external relationships into which the Coventry NAS/UWT entered. The nature of the local association itself, and the influence which

the changes had on this, were important since, in one area in particular, that of the branch-union relationship, the Coventry NAS/UWT is unlike most other unions in the way in which this particular relationship is structured. The changes in the local association tended to emphasise these characteristics by removing certain functions from the general meeting and, thereby, diminishing the nominal workplace representation although, in fact, increasing the actual representation. Under the old system more people were eligible to represent their schools at local association general meetings but few actually did so. The changes meant that while fewer people could, as a right, attend meetings on behalf of the members, these people did attend and, therefore, members were actually represented when previously they had not been.

By shifting the focus of representation away from the general meeting and towards the executive meeting and, at the same time, making the executive the arena for participation and the conferring of legitimation on actions taken, the peculiar nature of the workplace-branch-union relationship was highlighted. In the overall organization of the NAS/UWT the workplace group has no official status as part of the union structure except to the extent to which its views are represented elsewhere by its elected and accredited school representative. In Coventry, with its executive structure designed to ensure adequate workplace representation, there is no absolute guarantee that the school representative in any school will be a member of the executive, although many are so represented. In such a situation this lack of official status for workplace groups, and potential lack of representation for certain unidentified groups, resulted in the local association finding itself in an ambiguous position. It sometimes acted in the way

in which a workplace based group might, according to Boraston, Clegg and Rimmer, (1975), be expected to act; that is it handled specifically workplace based issues and grievances which might, in other unions, be dealt with by workplace based shop stewards. Because, as will be seen in the next chapter, the school representatives do not have the authority to act in this way to any large extent, this tends not to happen. Instead such matters are often brought to the local association's executive or dealt with by the local secretary who then appears to be acting as the workplace representative especially in some areas of his case work.

At other times the local association will be seen, not as a workplace based group, but as a group with wider interests and a wider constituency. The local secretary will also have wider responsibilities and concerns. He will, at times, be seen to be acting in the ways in which Boraston et al.,(1975), suggested that many full-time officials of the union might be thought to act. He has, as will be seen in Chapter 7, an ambiguous role with reference to the workplace. The relationship tends, on the whole, to be one in which he acts on behalf of those members in the particular school. The school representatives are precluded by the regulations of the union from acting on behalf of their colleagues in school to any great extent. This inhibits the degree to which school representatives can act as shop stewards or can play a major role as workplace representatives.

Boraston et. al, (1975), suggest that the workplace- full-time union officer relationship will tend to be one of dependence or independence with, in some situations, co-operation as an alternative. They point out, however, that an element of co-operation will be found in most situations. At the simplest level the extent to which the workplace is independent rests upon who deals with managers on important issues. In the Coventry NAS/UWT this would invariably be the local secretary but, perhaps, after the school representative had identified the issue. Often, however, members would consult the local secretary directly. The workplace can, in this sense, be seen to be independent of the local organization.

The role of the local secretary in dealing with representatives of management is stated clearly in the Guide to School Representatives (NAS/UWT 1977a). So is the relationship between the local secretary and the school. In some respects, however, the local secretary appears to do far more than might be expected from the guidelines given in the Handbook, (NAS/UWT 1977a). It will be argued in Chapters 6 and 7 that this is because the members are prepared to legitimate such actions as a result of their perceptions of what should be the appropriate relationships between the local union and the representative of the wider union, the Midland national executive member. The Coventry local secretary not only appeared to deal with the employers. He also dealt with the Midland executive member as if he, the local secretary, were the workplace representative while, at the same time, acting as the administrative link between his own local association and the national headquarters. Thus a key factor in understanding the local-national union relationship in this instance is the role played by the local secretary, the nearest that the Coventry NAS/UWT comes to a full-time lay officer, and the rest of the union structure.

The local organization in Coventry, structured its activities in such a way that participation focused on the executive. It also produced a situation in which much workplace business was not dealt with at the workplace itself. Rather much of the business which Boraston et. al., (1975), categorise as workplace business was dealt with by casework or at officers' meetings unless members from a particular school raised issues at executive meetings which they thought of some general interest. Such schools tended to be well represented on the executive committee and, usually, had school representatives of considerable experience and standing in the local association. The matters raised tended to be concerned with professional autonomy, the general enforement of particular regulations or, in a few cases, specific cases with a more general application. It will thus be seen that one factor which was influential in determining the content and nature of participation within the local association was the size of the membership group in the schools.

The extent to which the part-time lay officers, in this case the local association secretary, could fulfil the role played in some unions by the full-time officer is also a significant factor in determining the nature of local participation and in shaping local issues. In the Coventry NAS/UWT the local secretary used his own work place as a point of contact for his members. He was readily accessible there. He was time tabled to take time off for union activity on the basis of the size of the membership of the local association. Here, as at national level, the size of the membership was of some considerable significance. Obviously the larger the local association of any union, the greater would be the demand for a full-time local official although, in the NAS/UWT, such officials did not exist. The essential feature here is the availability of the local secretary. This was, in part, a function of the size of the membership since it was this which

helped to determine the allocation of time to which he could devote to union activities. It was also a function of the way in which he organized his own time and resources and a function of the ways in which resources were allocated, organized and, in this case, re-organized within the local association structure.

Boraston et. al., (1975) argue that many of the activities which call for the attention of a full-time officer relate to bargaining over wages and conditions. In thus arguing, tacit recognition is given to a two-fold division in bargaining. One aspect of bargaining focuses upon remuneration which includes pay, holidays, pensions and sick pay. The other is concerned with grading, recruitment, promotion, training, conditions of service and discipline. Such a classification is not adequate for dealing with the Coventry NAS/UWT or any other teachers' union even if the local part-time secretary is seen to be acting as a full-time official might act in other unions. Such an analysis of the content of bargaining to assume that union members will always legitimize the right of either the full-time officer, the shop steward or the lay officer to negotiate on their behalf on all of these issues in the workplace. This is not the case with the members of the Coventry NAS/UWT. Some of these areas, promotion and grading for example, are generally regarded as the individual concern of teachers not as the collective concern of the union. Such a stance is justified in terms of the claims to professional status which teachers make and which was considered in Chapter 2. Thus it is not only the willingness of management to recognize the right of unions to represent their members in a particular set of negotiations which is important as Boraston et. al.,(1975) suggest.

The willingness of members to recognize the legitimacy of the claims made by their union to represent them in particular ways on certain issues is also significant.

If some areas of traditional union activity are not always thought by its members to be the legitimate concern of the Coventry NAS/UWT, other areas are. Teachers, like many other groups in the public sector, have their salaries negotiated by a centralized bargaining system. Nevertheless even the most highly centralized system does leave scope for a wide range of matters which can be handled locally. In such cases, however, it may be that the scope for local negotiations may be more a result of practice than it is of procedure. An energetic and influential set of local officers may be able to extend their activities in a quite significant way. Much may also depend on the attitude and intentions of employers as well as the general ethos which informs and guides the negotiations between the union and the employer. In Coventry the relationship between the employer and the union and, more especially the local association secretary as a representative of the union, is central to the negotiating process. This would seem to suggest that managerial influence is important in determining the relationships between unions and their workplace groups. The LEA in Coventry determines the general educational policy which, in turn, dictates the size of schools, the organization of the work force within these schools and the managerial decision-making process which govern much of the context within which teachers operate in those schools. The division of negotiable issues between workplace, local and national levels is thus, in part, a function of the activities of management.

This division is also a function of the rules and regulations which the NAS/UWT has established to delimit the activities of its various officials at the national, regional, local, and workplace levels and of the extent to which the union is willing and able to establish a system of local bargaining. The position of the Coventry NAS/UWT appears to be somewhat paradoxical here. On the one hand the re-structuring of the local association was intended to build up a system of workplace representation as well as to encourage greater general participation in the activities of the local association. At the same time, the guidance given to school representatives places emphasis on their shop steward function in workplace representation. In practice, however, whilst participation levels did appear to change over time in relation to certain issues, the role of the school representative did not. This situation has come about because of the local and national restrictions placed on the activities of the school representatives.

Conclusion

Those factors which helped to shape the growth of the NAS/UWT at national level were equally significant in determining the development of the Coventry based local association. Here, however, local conditions made it necessary for a number of autonomous local associations to be established in such a way that their boundaries were coterminous with those of the relevant LEAs. As a result the increase in the size of the membership of the Coventry NAS/UWT may not, on the surface, appear to be as great as that to be found elsewhere. It was, nevertheless, sufficient to ensure that the union became the second largest in the City with a membership which, although difficult to define precisely,

was around 650 after the NAS/UWT merger in the mid-nineteen seventies.

As the membership increased and as attendance at the local association's general meetings failed to increase, officers felt some concern over the extent to which they could be seen to be representing the views of their members. Much of the business of the local association had, as in most unions, been dealt with at these monthly general meetings. The merger between the NAS and the UWT was seen, in Coventry, to be an ideal opportunity to re-structure the local association in an attempt to increase attendancies at meetings, ensure a more adequate representation of members, and protect the interests of the members of the UWT who were not only in the minority within the newly formed NAS/UWT but who were also far less experienced in union activity than their male counterparts.

The new structure changed the locus of decision-making. Henceforth the business of the local association would normally be dealt with at monthly executive committee meetings. The membership of this group was enlarged to include a wider range of interests within the local association as well as to ensure that the larger workplace groups were also able to be represented. At the same time the internal organization of the executive committee was changed to provide greater opportunities for active participation in the work of the local association as well as to give extra support to the officers who, with the increase in membership, had a heavier load to carry. Thus the structuring of participation in the local association was changed significantly. This could not, however, ensure that members availed themselves of the opportunities to participate which were thus created.

The re-structuring of the Coventry local association of the NAS/UWT illustrates the importance of one of the central issues in current thought on trade union organization. That issue concerns the nature of branch level activities. What are those activities and how are they carried out? Some of the answers to these two questions would appear to indicate that the branch is merely a residual part of trade union structure with very little significance in the main spheres of union activity. This view is not supported by an analysis of the Coventry NAS/UWT. The reasons for its re-structuring, as well as the nature of that re-structuring, indicate otherwise.

Without a local association organized in such a way that it can be seen that members have the opportunity to participate in decision-making in some way, if only by confering legitimation on the activities of officers, the whole of the enterprise is suspect. Thus, the shift in emphasis from the general meeting to the executive meeting, can be seen as an attempt to produce a structure which would enable members to participate in this process of legitimation.

If the key point of contact between member and union had ceased to be the general meeting and had become the monthly executive meeting, there were also some significant changes in emphasis in other aspects of the association's activity. The school representative was, within the NAS/UWT as a whole, being encouraged to take on the role of a workplace based shop steward within the school. The attitudes of union members, as well as the complex relationship between the various parts of the total union, and between the local union, its officers and the

LEA were such that the role of the school representative remained, at best, ill defined. It could not be assumed that the school representative/shop steward would always be the main focal point in the representativ e process. The reasons for this situation, and the influence it had on determining the nature of the activities of the Coventry NAS/UWT and the ways in which members participated in those activities are considered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

WORKPLACE REPRESENTATION

Introduction

The militant ethos which the NAS/UWT established in its dealings at both local and national level and its avowedly trade union approach to all aspects of its activities attracted a membership which was different from that of other teachers' unions. It also produced a set of policies about the nature of workplace representation which differed from those espoused by those other unions. This was as true in local NAS/UWT branches which retained a branch meeting based organization as it was of the Coventry NAS/UWT after the re-structuring of the local association. If anything the Coventry re-structuring, with its increased opportunities for workplace representation, its enlarged executive and its developing committee structure, provided even greater opportunities for school representatives to play a major part in the activities of the local assqciation.

The existence of a structure which permits groups to become involved in certain aspects of activity is one pre-requisite for participation and the exerting of influence. It is not sufficient, however, to ensure that this happens. Individuals and groups need to perceive the necessity for becoming involved and have to recognize this as part of a legitimate and shared set of expectations concerning their particular functions. In this case the workplace based members and the local officers, as well as the school representatives themselves were required to recognize that such participation was desirable. They also needed to share perceptions about the nature of that participation and the ways in which the school representatives might fit into the total structure of the local association.

The training programme which was given to the Coventry NAS/UWT school representatives was an attempt to articulate and make explicit the local officers' views about what those expectations and the resultant appropriate behaviour should be. These views owed something to the national policy on this matter but, as will be seen below, they tended to owe more to the attitudes of the officers to local conditions and the circumstances within which the school representatives were required to carry out their functions. The positions taken by the officers towards the school representatives can be interpreted as an attempt to influence and to control the ways in which they carried out their workplace functions as well as their wider activities on the local executive.

The NAS/UWT did, however, have a very clear national policy on the functions which were to be carried out by the school representatives and on the ways on which such duties should be understood by all concerned, especially the representatives themselves. This policy, too, formed part of the training programme. It also helped to shape the attitudes of local officers towards school representatives. In looking at the nature of the workplace representation in the Coventry NAS/UWT, the part which this representation played in enabling members' views to be presented to officers, and the processes of influence within the local association, there are four main factors to consider. The perceptions of the school representatives; the nature of the training given to them; the practice of representation and the influence those practices exert and to which they are subjected; and the national policy on workplace representations and the ways in which that policy is interpreted in Coventry.

NAS/UWT Policy for School Representation

Workplace representation in schools has traditionally been through a system of school representatives chosen from among the members in a given school. This position has long been regarded by union officers as a position of some strategic importance since the school representative was often the member's first point of contact with the union. For potential new members fresh from college, as yet unattached to a union, the school representative could act as the recruiting agent. He or she was usually the first member of the union to know who was new, who was leaving and who wished to change their union allegiance.

In practice, however, the main responsibility of the school representative was that of collecting subscriptions and, sometimes, passing on information to members in the schools. Very little else was expected of the school representative and very few of them expected to do anything else. As the pattern of collecting subscriptions changed in the ways outlined in the previous chapter, school representatives were left with the residual functions of chasing those members who were in arrears, where they could be identified, and of distributing messages from the branch and the other levels of the organization.

In spite of these relatively trivial duties the centrality of the school representatives in the effective working of teachers' unions has been widely recognized (Roy, 1964). The senior officers of the Coventry NAS/UWT recognized their role as a crucial one for the local association. The local treasurer still expected them to play a major part in the collection of subscriptions. He also assumed that they played a part in the distribution of information to members concerning

financial and other matters. Much of this, in Coventry, now appeared to be done through the local association's regular bulletin which was distributed directly to members in the workplace. The treasurer also expected the school representatives to play a less tangible role in the local association, that of providing leadership for NAS/UWT members within the schools. To this end he believed that they must be better informed about union policy, rights and responsibilities than the average member (NAS/UWT,1977d). He saw the training programme as an important step in the direction of achieving this objective. He also argued that the school representatives ought to be in a position to liaise between headteachers and members as well as to represent members in disputes which may arise in schools without necessarily involving officers of the local association. This appears to be in direct contradiction to the national policy for school representation as outlined in the Guide for School Representatives (1977a).

The local association's president was similarly unclear about the national guidelines for school representatives. He recognized that, at present, they were merely inefficient repositaries of information although he believed that their effectiveness here had been improved by the bulletin, provided that they kept it (NAS/UWT,1977c). He believed that they ought to become sufficiently well trained to accept much of the responsibility for sorting out the problems which, at the moment, appear as casework for the secretary. The president shared with the treasurer the opinion that the role of the school representative would expand and, indeed, must expand, if volunteers to fill such posts were still to be forthcoming.

These views reflect the strangely ambiguous nature of national policy towards workplace representation in the NAS/UWT. They are consistent with the spirit of the policy of developing the shop steward function of the school representative while, at the same time, they violate the letter of that same policy which warns that, 'the school representative is not expected to act for his colleagues beyond the preliminary stage of any issue,(NAS/UWT,1977a, 6). Much depends on the way in which 'preliminary stage' is interpreted here but this sentence appears to restrict the activities of workplace representatives severely. It may be that, in the future, this short sentence may prove to be inconsistent with the overall policy of the association. At the moment, however, it remains and, as will be seen below, it is not without its supporters.

Whatever ambiguity in interpretation, application or expectation there may be over this matter the NAS/UWT policy on workplace representation is set out clearly in the second paragraph of the Guide for School Representatives (NAS/UWT,1977a:5). This states that although the decision has been taken to retain the title of 'school representative' for the workplace representatives of the NAS/UWT, this does not imply that there is to be any 'dilution of the essential shop steward function', (NAS/UWT,1977a:5), which the school representative must seek to carry out. This involves being the first line of defence both in professional and trade union interests of their colleagues. The distinction between these two terms is not made explicit. Nor is the NAS/UWT's general approach to professional matters which was discussed in Chapter 2. The school representatives are left to sort out such issues for themselves or, more likely, in conjunction with local association officers.

Some attention is, however, given to the nature of shop stewardship. The shop steward, it is claimed, 'is the direct link between lower level management and the organized work force and is capable of resolving many difficultues which might otherwise develop into industrial disputes' (NAS/UWT,1977a:5). Detailed notes are given about relevant legislation, such as the Protection of Employment Act, trade union sanctions and their use, trade union recognition and agreed facilities for representatives of recognized teachers' organisations. The tone is clearly intended to convey to school representatives that they have far wider functions within the NAS/UWT than the mere collection of funds, the pursuing of members who are late in paying their subscriptions, and the dissemination of information. Their role is presented as being active rather than passive and, in spite of some brief but important indications to the contrary, the impression is created that the school representatives have a significant part to play in handling disputes, case work and other local union matters.

In contrast to this emphasis on the shop steward function of the NAS/UWT school representative, the same post in the NUT is given a very different brief. The School Representative' Handbook (NUT,1982) makes no mention of a shop steward function for the NUT workplace representative. The functions to be carried out by the school representative are listed as being, 'The direct recruitment of members, ... collection of subscriptions ... disseminating both local and national information from the union to the members ... and handling the initial stages of individual grievances of union members' (NUT,1982:5-6). There is no reference made to union or employment legislation nor is any real information provided on the agreed facilities for representatives.

This Handbook, (NUT,1982), is directed towards locating the school representative firmly within the local, regional, and national structure of the union.

In many ways the nature of the tasks outlined for the school representatives is very similar. Both are expected to deal with the same types of situations and, in fact, the instructions given by the different unions bear a striking resemblance to each other. The crucial difference is the manner in which the information to school representatives is presented and the emphasis which it receives. The NUT approach reflects an organizational structure which is intended to carry out a range of functions, only one of which is that of a trade union. For this reason far less emphasis is placed on workplace representation of the traditional trade union type. The NAS/UWT, with its specific concern for trade union activity and the protection of members' interests, has placed a very different emphasis on its policy for workplace representation. This emphasis, together with a certain ambiguity in the way in which it is presented to school representatives, had led to a situation in which there is some confusion about what school representatives should be doing and about what it is that they are, according to the NAS/UWT's own policy, actually allowed to do.

The Coventry NAS/UWT School Representatives: Selection

This ambiguity about what school representatives ought to recognize as their legitimate functions caused some problems for the executive of the Coventry NAS/UWT particularly because, as will be shown in Chapters 6 and 7, the local association had its own strategy for coping with negotiations with the employer. The

officers of the local association were concerned that a school representative acting unwisely might create difficulties which could lead to a breakdown in this strategy. This concern helped to shape the attitudes of the local secretary, in particular, in his own dealings with school representatives.

The association at both local and national level was anxious that school representatives were chosen by the members in the workplace and that, once chosen, they were worthy of the accreditation which they must receive in order to act as school representatives. Both the election and the accreditation of school representatives presented some difficulty in Coventry. In accordance with the code of practice issued under section 6 of the Employment Protection Act 1975, (quoted in NAS/UWT,1977a), the school representative must be elected annually or when a vacancy occurs. This must be done by a meeting of the NAS/UWT members in that particular school. It is stressed that the meeting need not be a formal one but that all existing workplace members must be informed of the time, place, date and purpose of the meeting by its convenor and that the meeting must be conducted in a proper manner. Once the election has taken place both the headteacher and the local association secretary are to be informed of the result in writing as soon as possible (NAS/UWT,1977a). Accreditation is then given to the duly elected school representative and this cannot be withheld provided that the election meeting has been conducted in a proper manner.

The officers of the Coventry local association tended to play a more active part in the election of school representatives than might, at first, be assumed from the description of the procedure which is to be found in the Guide for School Representatives, NAS/UWT, 1977a). This was because they wanted to ensure that those

representatives who were elected, many of whom would become members of the executive committee under the re-structured organization, would have the necessary experience as teachers and union members to fit them for such an office. They believed that the national policy for workplace representation required, for its success, that the school representatives should be experienced union members who were also well respected within their own schools. Although, as has been argued, the actual scope which school representatives have for workplace bargaining is very limited, they may well be involved in the initial stages of conditions of service disputes. Many of these revolve around the unresolved issue of that nature of the teaching day. The officers regarded this as a very sensitive area. They were looking, therefore, for teachers with at least three years teaching experience together with some significant union experience, ideally office holding of some kind. In an association the size of the Coventry NAS/UWT this was not always possible and,therefore, the officers sought to exert some influence over the choices made..

They did this in a variety of ways. Each year the local secretary made a point of writing to all schools with a large workplace membership reminding members that an election for school representative must take place, drawing attention to the need for a properly constituted meeting, and reminding members that the elected representative should be somebody 'responsible', experienced, and of good standing in the school. The secretary also asked to be notified of the relevant meetings in advance. This would give the officers an opportunity to send a representative to the meeting.

Normally this would be the local secretary who felt that it was part of his function to attempt to influence the choice of representative wherever possible. At the very least he was thus able to ensure that the meetings were properly conducted. The LEA gave the secretary a very generous time allowance in order to do this and, as a result, he did manage to attend most such meetings. It is clearly in the interest of the LEA, as well as of the local association, to ensure that suitable candidiates are elected as school representatives.

Where the secretary was unable to exert direct influence on elections in this way he sought to exert indirect influence. Other officers of the union were encouraged to attend meetings. This was not always easy since most of the time for union work granted by the employer tended to go to the secretary who carries the heaviest burden. In the event of another officer being unable to attend, the secretary approached other senior members of the local association within the school in question, in an attempt to ensure that suitably experienced candidates were nominated and, therefore, elected. It would not be fair to see this process as a direct attempt on the part of the officers to influence the actual result of elections in terms of wanting preferred candidates elected. The activities of the officers were directed more towards influencing the type of candidate who emerged as school representative.

After elections had taken place the officers made every effort to ensure that school representatives recognize that the workplace is a sub-section of the Coventry local association and, as such, has no real autonomy of its own. All actions must, therefore, go through the local association. This normally meant the local secretary

(NAS/UWT,1977a:6). School representatives can, under certain circumstances, negotiate with headteachers on some matters which are entirely internal to the school but few such matters are ever entirely internal since they frequently relate, in Coventry, to LEA or union policy. This had to be pointed out to school representatives by local officers as had their role in distributing information to members, and passing on details of impending grievances to the local secretary. Many school representatives, however, still had a far less precise view of their duties than might be assumed from this discussion of the involvement of local officers in their election, and from the outline of their functions provided for them by the national association. This lack of clarity as well as other factors such as experience, trade union membership and commitment to the NAS/UWT school representative role, appeared to be unequally distributed throughout the local association.

The Coventry NAS/UWT School Representatives: Experience and Perceptions

Since the NAS/UWT merger the local association's primary school membership has increased but it is still relatively small. The work groups are, by their very nature, also small and, therefore, the NAS/UWT membership in any one school will rarely, if ever, reach double figures. In view of this, the choice of candidates for school representative is somewhat restricted. In spite of this, as Appendix B, Table 1, shows, over half of the primary school representatives who responded to the questionnaire, (see Appendix A), had been members for nine or more years and a further third for over twenty years. This may be explained by the presence of a number

of primary school headteachers who had been active in the NAS or UWT for many years and were, in most cases, the only members on their schools for a long time. The remaining 17% who had less than two years experience of union membership included one young man in his probationary year who had been active as a student representative of the NAS/UWT at the local college of education. He was already a member of the local executive.

The secondary sample showed a similar pattern. Well over half of the sample had been members of the union for nine or more years while 17% had less than two years experience as a member. This is perhaps less surprising in the secondary sector than in the primary sector for several reasons. The schools tend to be much bigger, the workplace membership larger and, therefore, the members have a wider choice of candidates from which to select their representatives. Traditionally the large secondary schools have been fertile recruiting grounds for the NAS while the much smaller primary schools with their preponderence of women teachers had, until the merger between the two unions, only been eligible to join the much smaller UWT and were, therefore, a much less significant part of the association's membership. At the same time it was those elections which took place in the large secondary schools to which the officers directed their attention when they attempted to influence the choice of school representatives. In terms of the length of their membership of the association both the primary and secondary groups of school representatives were, on the whole, experienced and long serving members.

The situation was somewhat different when length of service as a school representative was considered (see Appendix B,Table 2). Here half of the primary sample had served as a school representative for two years or less while in the secondary sample the same was true of 40% of respondents. In each group a third of the representatives had between three and eight years experience in their positions while of the remainder, most had been school representatives for between nine and nineteen years. Two of the secondary sample had held office for over twenty years. The primary group can be seen to be slightly less experienced as school representatives than were the secondary group. Again the reasons for this may be similar to those indicated earlier such as size of workplace, attempts of officers to influence choices and the preponderence of UWT members in primary schools. To the extent that a significant proportion of the total sample had less than two years experience of holding office as school representative the attempts which were made by the officers to ensure that there was continuity in office and that school representatives were able to gain experience of their office was not as successful as the officers, no doubt, hoped it might be. This relative inexperience in office was one of the reasons given by the local secretary for his doubts about the national policy of seeking to widen the role of school representatives (NAS/UWT,1977g).

When other factors are examined the difference between the primary and secondary groups becomes more marked. This is especially true when the extent to which school representatives hold or have held other offices within the association is considered. In the primary

sample two people were currently members of the local executive and a third had been recruiting officer in another local association. None of the others had held any other office within the NAS or the UWT. Several of them, however, came from schools in which there was a senior member of the association. In the secondary sample the situation was very different. Almost half of the group was active on the present executive. A further third had previously participated extensively at local and regional levels. This difference, while perhaps a factor of size, is also related to the ways in which opportunity for participation is structured in the Coventry NAS/UWT. The structure provides far more opportunity for members from large workplace groups to become local executive members and, therefore, to gain wider experience at local level. This is true in spite of the provisions which were built into the structure to safeguard the interest of smaller workplace groups. It also reflects the NAS/UWT's perceptions about the nature and location of its membership strength which, as was argued in the previous two chapters, is evident at both local and national level. The activities of the local officers also played some part in this structuring of opportunity especially as the local sceretary, in particular, made strenuous efforts to ensure that suitable candidates were elected as representatives from the larger schools in the city (NAS/UWT,1977g).

The two groups of school representatives also differed in other ways. All the primary school group claimed that they had become school representatives, in the first instance, because nobody else was available, perhaps due to a small workplace membership, or because a long serving member who was difficult to replace had retired, or because nobody else was willing to take the job. None of them spent

more than an hour each week on their union activities and, according to the majority of them, their duties made no significant demands on their time at all on a regular basis. This may perhaps have been because, in small schools, the tasks are easy to carry out or because the nature of the tasks was different in such schools. Pupil assaults on teachers are relatively rare in schools where the children are under 11 years old. Interaction between head and staff in a small school may mean that those conflicts which, in larger schools can lead to grievances and disputes, are dealt with in different ways and do not result in major conflicts with which the union might become involved. This group of school representatives appeared, perhaps as a result of such factors, to have no clear idea about what their role as school representative involved or about how their duties should be carried out. Those who had a view of their role saw it in terms of reading the literature which was, from time to time, sent to them and passing on information to their colleagues as they thought necessary. Few conceptualized their role in terms of highlighting the differences between the NAS/UWT and the NUT in an attempt to attract more members to the union within this NUT dominated part of the education service. Only one of them claimed to attend executive meetings regularly in spite of the fact that two of them were members. This same member was the only one who claimed to attend the branch meetings when they were held while one claimed never to have attended a meeting during his nine years as a school representative. Yet every member of the sample claimed to regard such meetings as important for obtaining information relevant to their duties. Possibly the local bulletins and the

Schoolmaster and Career Teacher, which they all said were read regularly, were a more accessible source of information. Certainly none of this group claimed to have regular contact with officers or members of the local executive. The members in their own school formed the most significant part of their network of communication although discussions with non members was also important.

In contrast to this the secondary school group included only a small number who became school representative because nobody else wanted the job or was available to do it and very few were ever elected unopposed. All of the others stated that they became school representatives because of their interest in the union and its activities and because of their support for its policies. Very few of this group, therefore, appear to have drifted into the offices which they held. They all spent some time on their duties. One representative spent less than one hour a week on his school representatives activities but this was because he had an assistant who did most of the work while he attended to his other, substantial, NAS/UWT commitments at regional level. By far the majority of the group claimed to spend more than an hour a week on their duties, with some spending more than two hours on them. Obviously the size of schools, the size of the workplace membership, ease of communication and the nature of potential problems all contributed to this difference in activities between the primary and secondary group. The secondary group did, however, appear to have a far greater commitment to their school representative role and a wider view of the functions which they might fulfil. Although, as with the primary group, a significant amount of time was spent passing information on to members on matters such as salaries, conditions of service and pensions, many secondary school representatives saw that they

ought also be able to do more than provide information. They expected to be able to give informed advice on many matters as well as to be able to put members in touch with local officers who could help them further should the need arise. In order to do this effectively these school representatives needed to be more active, better informed and have contact with a wider range of local union officials than did their primary counterparts.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that all but two of this group claimed to attend branch and executive meetings regularly. Like their primary counterparts, the secondary school representatives said that they read the association's publications thoroughly but, unlike the primary group, the secondary group appeared to have a wide range of contacts within the officer network of the local association. They used this range of contacts frequently themselves and also put their members in touch with other members outside the immediate context of their own schools when they thought it was appropriate. They also appeared to organize workplace meetings to discuss issues with their own members. As will be seen in Chapter 6 some of these issues eventually found their way to the agenda of the local executive meetings. As has been argued already, a number of school based structural factors and local association related opportunity factors might account for these differences in practice between the two groups of school representatives. In spite of the differences between the two groups, however, neither group appeared either willing or able to perform in such a way as to fulfil the 'essential shop steward' aspect of their role which is described in their Guide for School Representatives (NAS/UWT,1977a).

In order to fulfil such a role, representatives would need to espouse the collectivist views on which it was based, perhaps to the

exclusion of other possible justifications for workplace and union practices, and, at the same time, to believe that their members would share these views. This was not the case. While it can be seen, (Appendix B, Table 5), the the NAS/UWT's career teacher policy, and the emphasis placed within the association on service to members, combined with opposition to other unions, particularly the NUT, were important in attracting school representatives themselves to the association, they did not always attribute the same motives to their fellow members. It is possible, however, that the concerns which the school representatives felt that members had which, in turn, translated themselves into reasons for joining unions, might, within the NAS/UWT be indicative of a broadly based support for the association's policies (Appendix B,Table 3). Among the school representatives as a whole there was an evident commitment to those policies. Predictably enough the two main reasons given by school representatives for joining a union themselves, (Appendix B, Table 4), and suggested by them as to why others joined teachers' unions were to obtain legal protection and an interest in salary negotiations. This was often coupled with the opinion that the NAS/UWT performed better in this respect than did rival unions, and with expressions of wider support for NAS/UWT policy. What was entirely missing from the responses of the primary group and of little significance in those of the secondary group, was any general statement about commitment to union principles as an overall legitimation for action. It became clear from the reaction of the school representatives to their training sessions that few, if any of them, had considered themselves to be part of an organization which was seeking to create,

for them, conditions in which they could operate as workplace based shop stewards. For most of these school representatives their training courses brought them into contact, for the first time, with the true nature of the national association's policy on workplace representation. For them it was the first time that they had encountered such a range of possibilities and, for some, it was an uncomfortable experience.

The Coventry NAS/UWT School Representatives: Training

The senior officers of the local association were very aware of the differences between the expectations of school representatives derived from national policy and the actual performance of those representatives (NAS/UWT,1977c; 1977d; 1977f). They also recognized the extent to which many school representatives failed to understand the implications of that national policy for the position to which they had been elected by their workplace group and, at the same time, that an almost total lack of training would have prevented the school representatives from fulfilling those functions had they been understood. The reservations that some of the officers had about the application of this national policy has already been touched upon above. Whether or not the national policy met with universal approval within the Coventry local association, the need for a training programme for school representatives was obvious.

Attempts to establish a series of training courses for school representatives occupied both the senior officers and the executive committee of the local association for most of the period between June 1976 and July 1977. The responsibility for organizing these courses was passed between the officers, the executive and the recruitment sub-committee of the executive for almost a year before anything materialized. In June 1976 it was proposed that 'some form of training course' for school representatives should be 'got off

the ground', (NAS/UWT,1976f), a form of words which was unusually vague for an executive committee meeting agenda motion. The implication was that, like school representatives themselves, these courses were thought to be important but nobody was sure what they should do.

There was a distinct lack of clarity about how to implement NAS/UWT policy on workplace representation but, by July 1976, the officers had decided that a training course for secondary school representatives would be organized in the following October (NAS/UWT, 1976g). The main speaker was to be a member of the National Executive Training Committee. In the event the course failed to take place because he proved to be unavailable, although an afternoon session on the role of the school representative and his relationship to the local association did take place. This was poorly attended and the idea of a further course was buried under the combined weight of more pressing matters until the following year, (NAS/UWT,1977j), at which time the president announced that a course would be held in the Summer Term on the legal aspect of the school representatives' functions. This was to be followed by a second course in the Autumn Term on a topic to be decided (NAS/UWT,1977j).

Within a month this plan was changed (NAS/UWT,1977k). The intention now was to hold one course for primary school representatives and another for secondary school representatives, both in the Summer Term. The change came about through representations made by several executive members who worked in primary schools to the effect that the nature of the tasks facing representatives in the different sector of the education service were significantly different, a point of view

which was not bourne out by the content of the two courses, but which is in keeping with much of the language of professionalism which is used by teachers when discussing educational practices.

The organization of the course was, by this time, firmly in the hands of the recruitment sub-committee. Arrangements appeared to be proceeding much more smoothly now that this group had specific responsibility for them. The primary school representative's course was to concentrate on schools with more than four members and was to be conducted by the National Training Officer. The secondary course would be for school representatives from all schools in the city and would focus on legal problems in schools. The main speaker would be the National Executive expert in this field. Both courses required that those attending be given time off from school by the LEA, a significant breakthrough for teachers in the city since it was the first time that the terms of this particular provision of the 1975 Employment Protection Act was implemented in Coventry. Both courses were to be an attempt to articulate national policy within a local context.

The Primary School Course. The NAS/UWT primary school representative's training course held at the Elm Bank Teachers' Centre on 23rd June 1977, was the first attempt in the city to provide primary school representatives with any type of formal training. It explored the role of the representative in school as summarised in the Guide for School Representatives (NAS/UWT, 1977a). It was clear from the reaction of many of those who attended the course that the information presented to them was entirely new. They had obviously not read their literature sufficiently carefully. For some the information was difficult to reconcile with their notion of teaching as a professional activity, from which standpoint certain activities were not the province of the union and certain forms of justifications for actions required of them and the union were not

acceptable. This type of reaction was directed at the National Executive Training Officer and the national policy rather than at the local association or its representatives.

Most school representatives had little difficulty in accepting the initial outline of their role. It was pointed out to them that as representatives of their union they were entitled to received training and that the very existence of the course was evidence of that right. They also accepted that it was legitimate on the part of the union to expect that school representatives to be fully conversant with union policy and practices, and that representatives should know their own powers and duties which most of them, at this stage, did not. Thus the procedure to be followed by school representatives when issues developed was outlined. It was made clear that, although the representatives had the authority to deal with the initial stages, this was all that could be done without first involving the local secretary who, in turn, should contact the national executive member and, if necessary, the legal department at headquarters. Most representatives were surprised to learn that they had a right to expect facilities in school for maintaining contact with their members, recruitment, and communicating in private with union members and officials. They were also told that they could reasonably expect to have access to telephones, rooms for meetings, typing and duplicating resources which were essential for their union activities where this did not interfere with the work of the school. All this was merely a prelude to a more detailed consideration of the practical aspects of the school representatives' roles based on NAS/UWT policy.

The primary school representatives were told that it was part of their duty to become involved at the earliest stages in any grievance procedure that may affect a member. It was also made clear that, as a regular part of their duties, they should establish frequent consultations with the headteacher to prevent problems before they arise and that, in any case, they must be consulted by the head on all matters affecting the conditions of service of the members within the school. Conditions of service was defined in an extremely broad way to include changes in teaching duties, promotions and out-of-school activities. This training placed the onus firmly on the NAS/UWT school representative for ensuring that the proper procedures were followed in all cases even if, as often appeared to be the case, the headteacher was unaware of the proper procedures. In order to be sufficiently well informed to carry out these functions, school representatives were told that they could expect to have access to a wide range of information about their school, much of which might be regarded as confidential. This should include details of promotions and the distribution of posts of responsibility as well as the nature of those responsibilities. This type of information has normally been regarded as the concern of the head and the individual teacher.

Many of the school representatives at the training session shared the view that much of this was not their concern. They argued that promotion was always dealt with on an individual and an individualistic basis and was not an appropriate sphere for collective concern let alone collective action. It was felt that the introduction of such practices, which the representatives saw as having their origins in industrial trade unionism, would endanger the delicate relationship that existed

between the staff of schools and the headteacher who was regarded as another teacher rather than as a member of middle management, which was how the NAS/UWT national policy presents the head's position.

Although it was made clear that their main role was to represent members should a dispute arise and that they could not initiate action, these school representatives all expressed considerable disquiet about the nature of the duties which were being ascribed to them. Their view of their role was a much more limited one and one which did not owe any allegiance to the shop steward view of their functions favoured by national policy-makers. This, in part, explains the pre-occupation of primary school representatives with the information distribution aspects of their duties which was discussed in the previous section. The differences between the national policy for school representation and the perceptions of their own role by these primary school representatives stems, it can be argued, from different notions about the nature of appropriate union activity and about teaching held by the different groups involved. The extent to which the NAS/UWT should become involved in areas such as promotion and the arrangements for allocating teaching duties would not be decided by a discussion about the facts of any particular case. Such involvement would be regarded as appropriate or otherwise on the basis of views about the legitimacy of the justification given for such involvement.

If for these school representatives, the justifications given were not couched in terms which they found appropriate and acceptable then such involvement would be rejected. Therefore, where some aspects of school activity are regarded by them as the province of the individual or as a professional rather than a union concern, they

will reject attempts to involve themselves and others in such matters on the basis of their union position and will only accept such involvement when it is legitimated in professional or individualistic terms. This, as will be seen in later chapters, was equally true of the local executive which rejected certain positions derived from national association policy on the grounds that such issues were professional concerns and, as such, were not appropriate areas for union involvement. A similar disagreement about the local application of national policy was also identified during the secondary school representative's training session.

The Secondary School Course. This training course was the subject of complaint and conflict from its initiation. The officers disagreed about the emphasis which ought to be placed on the various aspects of the course content during their officer's meeting on 25 June 1977. The secretary wanted to stress the rights and obligations of the school representatives in a way similar to that of the primary course in an attempt to make clear the limitations on the activities of school representatives. Other officers, less concerned with what the secretary saw as the inherent dangers in the expanding role of the school representative, especially in large schools, wanted a more flexible format which would allow representatives the scope to raise matters which were of particular importance to them. The secretary was sure that if such an approach was followed then some issues, especially that of accreditation, may not receive the attention which he felt they merited.

Within the NAS/UWT national policy on workplace representation accreditation is central to establishing the legitimacy of the school representative. It confers, in the eyes of the union at least, the right to be consulted on a range of school policy matters and to have access to those facilities necessary for carrying out union duties. It also gives the right to have access to the headteacher and others making decisions likely to affect the conditions of service of NAS/UWT members. The secretary wanted to use this training course to emphasize the importance of accreditation and to point out that, in practice, it only gave the school representative very limited scope for action before the local secretary had to become involved in proceedings. He also wanted to explore the thorny issue of whether or not accreditation was automatic once a properly constituted meeting has elected a school representative, being of the opinion himself that a local secretary could withhold accreditation if a properly elected representative was, in some way, 'unsuitable'. He also believed that accreditation could be withdrawn if the school representative proved to be 'irresponsible'. Many school representatives and some officers did not share this interpretation, believing that accreditation was automatic after an election and that a school representative could only be removed by another election.

In the event a compromise over the course content was reached. The first part of the session was to deal with rights and obligations of school representatives. The second part was to be organized in such a way as to allow representatives to choose from areas of particular concern such as violent and disruptive pupils, working conditions

and school governors. The first part of the course proved to be very similar to that provided for the primary group except that particular emphasis was given to the way in which the increase in the size of schools had made it more likely that school representatives would have to act more often on disputes and grievances than had previously been the case. The local secretary argued that it was this increase in school size which had led to the development of the NAS/UWT policy on workplace representation because the larger size of schools had resulted in a radical change in the relationship between heads and their staff. The role of the school representative had to change to meet this new situation.

This part of the course did enable the local secretary to present his view of accreditation. His interpretation of the nature of accreditation was not challenged by any of the school representatives who attended the course nor by the Midland Area National Executive member who attended the meeting. He did point out, however, that accreditation provided the school representative with protection in the event of a grievance procedure being brought against him. This was important because, as several of the school representatives indicated, a school representative who acted according to the NAS/UWT policy did run the risk of becoming vunerable to pressures within the school. Regular consultations with headteachers, local officers, and workplace members were recommended as a safeguard against such situations arising.

It was implicit in NAS/UWT policy that the nature of decision-making in schools was changing and that, therefore, the ways in which the association set about representing its members and structuring their

participation in such decision-making had to change. The local secretary suggested to the secondary school representatives that whereas, traditionally the majority of decisions in schools had been taken at staff meetings where anyone opposing the wishes of the head could be placed in a difficult situation, in future this would not be the case. He argued that recent legislation required that the employees' workplace representatives now had the right to be consulted on all matters pertaining to broadly defined conditions of service issues. He also warned that most headteachers either did not know or would not accept this change in decision-making, in which case the school representative must bring the legislation to the attention of the headteacher.

Here again the discussion focused, as with the primary group, on the appropriate nature of union activity within the school. In this case, however, there was general support for the NAS/UWT policy on the role of the school representatives. The main cautioning voice was that of the local secretary counselling representatives about the limitations of their authority. As a group the secondary school representatives were more willing than their primary counterparts to accept the duties prescribed by them for the new policy. They endorsed the view that the role of the school representative should be expanded in the light of recent legislation and that the association should play a much larger part in school decision-making. This was especially true of areas such as health and safety, disruptive pupils and violence towards teachers. This should not be taken to mean that this group did not share a similar view to that of the primary colleagues about appropriate forms of union activity in schools for, as will be shown in Chapter 6,

when the NAS/UWT appeared to be involving itself in curriculum issues under the guise of conditions of service, this was resisted strongly by secondary school members.

Never the less there was a difference between the two groups of school representatives. The secondary group tended to see the policy on workplace representation as an opportunity, within limits, to do what they felt ought to be done while the primary group, on the whole, saw the policy as unnecessary or irrelevant to their situation. As has already been suggested the different school context and the type of relationships which they might produce have shaped these different perceptions of the role of the school representative. On the other hand there is some evidence to suggest that people who tend to become school representatives in the two types of school come to the position with different perceptions about matters such as their potential role in the school and the local association, the function of the national association and trade unionism generally or, at least, they develop these perceptions as a result of becoming school representatives (Appendix B, Tables 4 and 5). In the larger schools with larger workplace membership the secondary school representative may feel less isolated, have more support, and be presented with more opportunities to develop a wider role if so desired than his colleague in the more dispersed primary sector. In both parts of the education service within Coventry, there is still a considerable gap between the policy based expectations of the National Executive about the school representatives, and the actual performance of those school representatives who attended the two training courses in Coventry, to say nothing of the extent to which the policy has found general

acceptance among the officers of the association.

Expectation and Performance

The changing policy towards workplace representation means that school representatives are now being asked to have a much broader view of their activities than has previously been the case. They are also being asked to develop a different stance towards those activities. They are, in many circumstances, being asked to adopt a pro-active stance rather than a re-active one which was the most that was expected of the traditional school representative. Given the almost total lack of training provided on a regular basis for school representatives and the relative inexperience of the majority of them, the implementation of the policy of developing a shop steward function for school representatives is going to be extremely difficult.

The difficulties of organizing a fragmented local government workforce have been recognised by Terry,(1982), who suggests that the typical factors which tend to produce workplace bargaining power and lead to the growth of a shop steward system are not present in local government. These factors (competitive product markets, work group homogeneity, freedom to bargain over wages and weak national agreements), do not apply in the education service. The fragmented nature of the workforce helps to make the traditional pattern of workplace based shop steward organization inappropriate for groups such as teachers. As a result the distinction between the branch and the workplace organization has undergone some changes, the result of which, for the NAS/UWT in Coventry as well as for the unions examined by Terry, (1982), was a blurring of the areas of responsibility. In the NAS/UWT the reorganization of the branch led to a closer link between the executive and the workplace while the

policy of shop steward activity established for the school representatives produced a growing desire by the local officers to monitor, if not to intervene in workplace activities.

Certainly those people being elected to school representative positions did not have the knowledge and background of workplace negotiation which might be found in a typical shop steward's committee. The resulting general uncertainty about the reliability of school representatives helped in Coventry, especially but not exclusively, by the secretary had implications for the role which the officers themselves played within the local association. They not only felt the need to influence the election of representatives in the ways discussed above, but they also believed that some situations had to be dealt with more quickly than might otherwise have been the case in order to ensure that the issues did not become blurred and the problem expand into a major crisis through the hasty action of an inexperienced school representative. This was especially true of problems involving matters of conditions of service since legitimate areas of concern were still in the process of being established between unions, schools and LEAs. Such situations and the dangers inherent in them appear to be a direct result of school representatives being insufficiently trained or experienced and, therefore, failing to understand their essential shop steward function.

The reasons for this failure to come to terms with the shop steward function which is now being required of the NAS/UWT school representatives has interesting parallels in NUPE where the work of Fryer, Fairclough and Manion, (1974), indicates some revealing similarities. They identify a weak trade union tradition among the developing shop steward group in NUPE which has much the same effect as that in the NAS/UWT. Feelings of remoteness because of the relative isolation

of the workplaces where only a small group of members are to be found is equally true of the NAS/UWT members, especially those in primary schools, although none of the workplace organizations are large by the standards of some unions given a total branch membership of only 650. The introduction of subscriptions deducted at source or being paid directly to headquarters meant that the NUPE local representatives, like their NAS/UWT counterparts had less reason to be in regular contact with their workplace membership while the relatively high level of teacher turnover in schools made it even more difficult for the NAS/UWT school representatives to maintain close contact with some members. The practice of using representatives as debt collectors and distributors of information had meant that no effective form of consultation developed between the representatives and other people in schools because such consultation was thought neither necessary nor desirable. At best, therefore, representatives can be expected to be effective re-actors. Most of them do not have the range of resources to adopt a pro-active stance even though some of the intended consequences of the new policy on workplace representation are designed to move the school representatives from a re-active to a pro-active stance. This is at a time when many of them have not yet come to terms with their re-active duties.

Conclusion

The NAS/UWT policy on workplace representation and the related training programmes, the major contributions to which were made by national executive members, were clearly intended to develop a set of shared perceptions about union activity in general and of the role of the school representative as a workplace representative in particular. These perceptions assume that the school representative

has a significant part to play in the representative process. The officers of the local association also made this assumption. While many of the school representatives,especially those in the secondary schools, appeared to have a general commitment to their union they were less sure about their role as school representative and less willing to accept the implications of the new policy for their own activities. Many of them had a less well formed view of what their representative activities were and ought to be. They regarded themselves as far more peripheral to both the local and national organization than either the traditional view of their functions or the new policy would suggest. As a result school representatives find themselves in a position where they are subject to sets of expectations which, at present, they are unable or unwilling to fulfil.

In this context the structural changes which were made in the organization of the Coventry NAS/UWT, which were designed to improve the representative process can be seen to provide advantages and disadvantages for school representatives. The changes certainly increased the opportunities available for representatives to play a larger role in the activities of the local association. At the same time, however, these changes also meant that greater demands were placed on those who held school representative office. Any representative who did become involved in the local executive would, in so doing, gain access to support and information to facilitate the carrying out of those duties which, increasingly, were expected of them. The structural changes in Coventry may have, thus, reinforced the ambiguities which surround the role of the school representative as defined by the new workplace representation policy.

The new policy expects more of the school representatives. Their changed position in the Coventry structure allowed them a greater opportunity to represent their members interests on the local executive and, at the same time, provided them with experience, knowledge and support upon which to build a wider role within the school as well as within the local association. At the same time, however, the union rules governing the execution of the essential shop steward function has not changed. This only allows school representatives very limited scope for action before they have to involve other officers of the association. Thus, in the same way, that there is considerable ambiguity about the extent that school representatives wish to accept the roles defined for them in the new policy, so there is ambiguity about the extent to which the existing rules which shape their actions actually allow school representatives to fulfil those duties identified for them by the process of implementing that policy.

In this extremely ambiguous situation the officers of the local association find that they have to take steps to ensure that those people elected to school representative posts, especially those in large schools with almost automatic rights of representation on the local executive are, in the eyes of those officers, suitable. This situation also gives an indication as to why the local secretary finds himself acting as both workplace representative and branch representative at various times and why so much of his time is taken up with school based casework. The local officers frequently express concern about the part played by the school representatives but, as will be seen in the next chapter, there is disagreement about the

directions in which the role of the representatives should develop. The ambiguous position of the school representative does, however, force the officers continually to consider their own positions within the local association and to take account both of the potential influence enjoyed by the school representatives and of the implications of such an ambiguous state not only for their own role on the local executive but also for that of their local secretary.

CHAPTER FIVE

LOCAL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATION

THE PRESIDENT AND THE TREASURER

Introduction

The re-organization of the Coventry NAS/UWT in 1976 was intended to create a more repesentative structure which, at the same time, would be more able to detect and articulate the wishes of the membership. The new structure resulted in an increase in overall participation in the activities of the local association by improving attendances at the enlarged executive meeting, as was seen in Chapter 3. It also ensured that significant groups of members were represented on the executive in a way which had not been the case prior to re-organization. Large workplace groups and those people who had been UWT members were thus guaranteed some form of representation on the executive.

The new structure also provided those school representatives in large workplace groups with wider opportunities for participation in the local association's work by giving these groups extra representation on the executive in the expectation that school representatives would use that extra representation to attend executive meetings and, therefore, be able to keep officers aware of the views of their members in those larger schools. This development took place at a time when the already ambiguous role of the school representative was under further pressure as a result of the national policy within the NAS/UWT on workplace representation. Many school representatives were not clear about what their old role ought to have been. Many more were unclear about what the implications of adopting a shop steward function in schools would be for them and some had serious reservations about the appropriateness of such a policy for the workplace representation of teachers. Many school representatives were thus in a situation where they had not yet

come to terms with the extent to which they were expected to react to situations in schools. In spite of this, however, they were now being expected to adopt pro-active stances in response to many situations which were developing in schools?

If school representatives were, as has frequently been argued, a significant part of the representative process in the NAS/UWT how, and to what extent, could they be seen to have any influence at all on the actions of officers when the representatives themselves were in such a state of incertainty about duties and how those duties should be carried out? Even if the attempts made by the officers to influence the nature of the selection process of school representatives was only partially successful it might be expected that there would be an upward distillation of power within the local association since the school representative group had not, as a group, developed that body of technical skill and expert knowledge upon which,as Michels, (1962), has argued, control of any organization is based.

Such a relatively unsophisticated view, however, fails to recognize the existence of structure which ensures that issues can be raised and that actions of officers can be challenged, criticized, and even changed. It also fails to recognize the extent to which, in a local association at least, actions taken by the executive and its officers require legitimation by the local membership. The structure which emerged in 1976, therefore, was not an essentially bureaucratic one. Rather it was one which sought to be representative and participative. It made the most of the existing processes of workplace representation while taking into account the lack of a well developed system of school representation. This structure existed within a context which enabled the actions of officers to be

subjected to scrutiny and criticism through the formal channels of representation. These channels, however, did not prohibit other forms of influence being exerted directly and indirectly through a wider participation in the activities of the union in Coventry. Such participation was based on particular issues and took the form of a reaction against activities which were either not seen as appropriate or the justifications for which were not acceptable to some members. Officers' responses to such challenges indicated that they shared with the wider membership a set of concerns over that over-ride commitment to many particular lines of action. These concerns could be seen in the actions of officers and the ways in which they perceived their own roles within the local association.

The Officers

If, as will be argued throughout this study, trade unions do not readily conform to the 'Iron Law of Oligarchy', then it might be argued that the central issue for any analysis of participation, control and influence in trade unions can no longer be about the extent to which members can influence the leadership. It might then be suggested, as Moran,(1974), does, that the most significant question for unions is how the leadership can ensure that the rank-and-file will comply with the directives of that leadership. This again is to take a relatively simplistic view of a complex process. The officers of the Coventry NAS/UWT have a far more complex relationship with their school representatives, their executive members and their rank-and-file than might be assumed from a question such as that posed by Moran.

None of those relationships can be understood in terms of a one way process of influence or control, which ever way that control and influence might be thought to operate. Similarly the structuring of those relationships within the local association ensure that influence and control can be exerted by officers over members and, in perhaps a different way, by members over officers. Officer-member interaction in the Coventry NAS/UWT is, in part, a product of the nature of trade union activity which will be discussed in the next chapter. It is also a product of sets of perceptions shared by officers and members, and of the need felt by the officers to be seen both by members and employers, to be representing the interests of the membership. In order to do this within such a relatively small arena as the Coventry Education Authority it was necessary for the actions of officers to receive legitimation in various ways from their members. Thus the relationship between officers and members may best be understood as a series of attempts to develop and negotiate shared perceptions, and a continual process of explaining and justifying actions taken.

This was true of all the officer group in the Coventry NAS/UWT but, for a variety of reasons, the onus of conducting officer-member relationships and much else besides, tended to fall on the president, the treasurer and the secretary. They formed a nucleus around which much of the business of the local association revolved. These were the crucial officers in the association. This was, in part, because the three office holders were among the most experienced members of the association, as well as the most active. It was also, in part, related to the nature of the offices held. At the same time it was

partly because of the composition of the rest of the officer group of the local association.

Apart from the treasurer, president and secretary, there were seven other officers of the local association. The officer group was thus similar in size to that of the much larger NUT. In the NAS/UWT, however, none of the officers had the kind of externally focused duties that some of the NUT officers had. This is strictly in keeping with the relatively narrow view of appropriate union activity taken by the NAS/UWT at both national and local levels. Only the secretary had duties which had any kind of external focus. His role will be examined in some detail in Chapter 7. Of the remaining nine there were, apart from treasurer and president, three other members of the officer group who were experienced and normally active in the affairs of the local association. Of these, one very soon became Midland Federation Treasurer, a post which occupied a significant proportion of his time although he still managed at attend executive meetings regularly and to act as one of the NAS/UWT representatives on the Coventry Trades Council. A second officer became ill and, therefore, played little part in the proceedings, while a third spent much of his time working on the newly established Health and Safety Committee of the executive to the exclusion of much else.

The four other officers were far less experienced than this group. Of these the membership secretary rarely appeared and he was eventually replaced and his duties taken over by a recruitment sub-committee as this part of the executive's structural development. The minutes secretary attended almost every meeting. She was a former member of the UWT and felt herself to be very inexperienced in union matters. She tended to concentrate on the practical aspects of her functions such as

minute taking and producing documents for the relevant meetings. This she did extremely efficiently and was, therefore, a very valuable officer. Only towards the end of her first year of office, however, did she begin to play a more active part in the discussions within the executive and officers' meetings. The other member of the group was the vice-president, also a former UWT member who was also relatively inexperienced. She used her office to acquire more experience through working with the secretary and president. Gradually she too came to play an increasingly important part in the affairs of the local association until, as the constitution states, she took over as president. The final place on the officer group of the executive committee was held by three people in fairly rapid succession and, during the period of this study, nobody became really established and active.

As with school representatives and the members themselves, most officers were significant in some aspect or other of the local association's activities during this study but this tended to be an issue - specific involvement rather than a generally significant contribution. The president, treasurer and secretary emerge as the most significant figures across the range of issues and activities over time as well as in interaction processes between officers, with other executive members and with the wider membership. Such a situation is not unusual. Boraston et.al.,(1975), found that where there was no full-time union official, then the local branch secretary tended to be the most significant figure in local union organization. One of the main factors in determining this influence was that of who was responsible for dealing with the employers. This, in the Coventry NAS/UWT, was almost always the secretary supported by the treasurer and the president. These two officers also recognized the importance

of who deals with employers and also aknowledged the central importance of the local secretary although, as will be seen below, they had different views on the extent to which the existing situation was desirable.

Only on the rarest of occasions was anyone other than the secretary with, perhaps, the help of one of the other two senior officers ever found to be dealing directly with officers of the LEA. Indeed, as has been seen in the previous chapter, such dealings were discouraged unless they were handled by the secretary. In spite to these differences in function and status within the officer group, and a real difference in opinion between some of the officers over the role of the secretary and the direction in which the executive ought to be moving if it is to maintain its concern with ensuring that it really does represent its members, the officers tend to present a unified image during the executive meetings. One factor in establishing this public unity is, undoubtedly, the part played by the officers' meetings in the structure of the Coventry NAS/UWT.

Officers' Meetings

These meetings took place a few days prior to the executive meeting. They were normally attended by all the officers and, unlike the executive meetings which were chaired by the president, these were chaired by the secretary. The secretary, at these meetings, reported on the progress of various cases with which he was currently involved although individuals were not normally identified in these discussions. The president and the treasurer were normally acquainted with these cases before the meetings. The secretary regarded the executive meetings as too public a forum at which to reveal the content of his casework

and so he used the officers' meetings to report on cases rather than to initiate discussion on them. Most of the other officers had no experience of casework at all so this was also regarded by the secretary as part of a continual process of training officers in the work of the local association. The process of reporting also served the function of legitimating the actions of the secretary and of rehearsing the arguments involved in the various cases. He also reported on the final outcomes of previous cases. This, too may be part of the process of legitimizing an aspect of the secretary's work which was not normally open to scrutiny by other executive members. It also provided an opportunity to evaluate the actions taken since this could only be done once the final outcomes were known. None of the information in this part of the meeting was shared with other executive members. This helped to create a feeling of officer identity or of belonging to an inner group which, in turn, made open disagreement much more difficult. It did not, however, prevent differences of opinion.

The agenda for the forthcoming executive committee meetings was also discussed at these meetings. This discussion focused on areas of possible conflict within the officer group rather than item by item. These areas tended to be identified by the secretary. While it would not be true to say that a common officer view always emerged or that a concept similar to that of cabinet responsibility operated within the group, it was clearly the intention of the secretary to minimize officer disagreements over issues at executive meetings. For example at one officers' meeting the main topic for discussion was a proposed meeting between the officers and the members of the incoming new administration. This discussion was to ensure that all officers were

aware of what was going to happen and, more importantly, why it was going to happen. It was obvious during the discussion that there were at least two different views about the purpose of the meeting held by different groups of officers. One group felt that the purpose of the proposed meeting was to hear the views of the incoming councillors while another wanted to use the opportunity to put over the Coventry NAS/UWT views about education within the city. Considerable time was spent at this particular officers' meeting resolving the disagreement in favour of the former position. This was the justification presented to the executive meeting a few evenings later. The stance taken by the officers on many other issues was worked out in a similar way. The other main function of officers' meetings was to check that actions agreed at previous executive committee meetings had, in fact, been carried out. To some extent this helped to make the organization of the school representatives' training courses less embarassing for the officers than otherwise might have been the case.

Difficulties between officers did emerge but, on the whole, these tended to be resolved away from the rest of the executive so that a relatively united front was presented at executive meetings. This happened in spite of clear differences between officers of the local association on several important matters. The very existence of an officers' meeting provided a forum for reconciling differences and establishing unity but nothing could guarantee that this would actually happen. The role played by the local association's secretary in the officers' meetings, as well as elsewhere within the organization, was crucial in ensuring that the officers acted as a coherent group in so far as they did just that. The differences between officers as illustrated, for example, by the differences between the treasurer and the president, might have otherwise produced some serious divisions

both within the officer group and within the executive itself. Had this been allowed to happen the process of justifying the actions of the officers and the executive both within the executive, and to the membership at large, would have been considerably more complex and difficult than it actually was.

The differences which were evident between the treasurer and the president at officers' meetings were symptomatic of different sets of perceptions about their own roles within the association; about the roles of other officers, especially the secretary; and about how the local association should develop in the future. These perceptions, in turn, were the product of different backgrounds, experiences and expectations. The extent to which these individual differences between senior officers were important for the conduct of the activities of the local association depended, in part, on the centrality of the roles played by those officers in the association and, in part, on the degree to which such differences could be overcome by reference to other sets of shared perceptions which had a wider constituency than the officer group itself.

The President

The president of the local association was the youngest of the three key officers. He was the only one who had experience of unions other than those in education. He trained as a metallurgist and during his time in the steel industry he was instrumental in organizing a staff association. He had been an NAS/UWT member for eleven years and was attracted to the association by its career teacher and militant stances. He thought that the NUT's short term recruitment pattern was detrimental to the interests of teachers and to those of the educational service in general. These concerns were frequently

evident in his attitudes towards much of what the Coventry NAS/UWT did (NAS/UWT,1977c). The president also had some experience of office in another local association where, after two terms as a member, he found himself elected to office as secretary. This post, he discovered, involved him in a substantial amount of clerical work and very little else, although he did try to develop casework where he could. This experience helped to shape many of his opinions about the ways in which the affairs of the Coventry NAS/UWT were conducted.

He moved to Coventry in 1972 to take up a post in a local comprehensive school where he found that, apart from his wife who was then a UWT member, he was the only member of the association. After a month in the post he was co-opted on to the executive committee and, in 1974, was elected unopposed as vice-president. He became president earlier than would normally be the case when the existing president left the area and was to remain in office, partly due to the arrangements which were made concerning the NAS/UWT merger in an attempt to ensure that a former UWT member succeeded him as president, until April 1977. After leaving office as president he remained a members of the officer group of the executive as ex-president for a further year as laid down in the constitution of the local association. He thus held office throughout the period of this study as did his wife, also an officer of the local association.

The president held office considerably longer than was usual. Nevertheless he still saw his own role, while in office, as merely that of a figurehead. He claimed that his main fuctions were to chair meetings and to represent the association on formal occasions.

This, he argued, made only a marginal contribution to the central task of the association which he saw to be that of looking after the interests of its members. The president defined the interests of the local membership in terms of the national views about where those interests were located and how they might best be served. In so doing the president showed clearly that he shared the narrow NAS/UWT approach to the role of the association in protecting those interests and approved of the methods used, at a national level as least, to fulfil that function.

At local level he was more critical of the ways in which things were done. He repeatedly stressed that the local association faced a number of problems with which it was not attempting to cope. Put together, his views on what these problems were and how they should be addressed, formed a real critique of the local organization or, more accurately, of the way in which he believed that the business of the local association was being conducted by the existing group of officers. His views could also be taken as an argument for the extension of the role of the president within the local association at the expense of a diminished role for the local secretary. At the same time, however, the changes which the president wanted to see were related to the problems facing the local association as he saw them. They were also related to a need perceived by the president further to increase the opportunities for member participation within the local association.

He saw this need as a major problem for the association since, for him, it was part of a wider problem of creating and maintaining a stable nucleus of active members while, at the same time, encouraging newer members, increasing their experience and retaining their interest. Since, in such a small association, there are only a limited number of officers' posts available and only a certain amount of real opportunity for participation in the work of the association, the

president wanted to see the responsibility for carrying out much of the association's work more widely distributed in order to involve more members, especially the younger, enthusiastic but, perhaps, less experienced members. Since, as will be seen below, much of the work of the local association was carried out by the local secretary, this, inevitably would mean a re-structuring of the way in which the secretary operated. It was clear that, on the basis of his own experience as secretary, as well as his observations of the way in which the secretary of the Coventry local association carried out his duties, the president believed that the job of secretary in Coventry was too big for one person. He was also afraid that, given his head, this particular secretary would dominate the local association. The danger inherent in such a situation was that the local association might appear from the outside to be a one man band and, as such, be regarded as having little real significance or substance within the Coventry education service.

The president wanted to see changes which might relieve the secretary of some of his work and involve other people. They might also involve a redistribution of casework. These changes would require that much of the semi-clerical and information digesting aspects of the secretary's functions be delegated to other officers and, at the same time, require that officers other than the secretary represented the NAS/UWT on a range of external committees. This, argued the president, might improve the efficiency with which such tasks were expedited and involve more people in the work of the local association. This change would be linked to the development of sub-committees which would specialize in various aspects of the association's work in Coventry. To some extent these changes already

appeared to be taking place as part of the re-structuring of the Coventry NAS/UWT. Sub-committees were established in 1976. There were assistant secretaries for minutes, membership and recruitment, all of whom were relatively young or inexperienced members of the local association. The president felt that such changes had not gone far enough. He wanted the Coventry NAS/UWT to be sufficiently well structured and well informed to be able to influence the policy and actions of the LEA rather than, as it was forced to do, merely respond to employer initiatives from the LEA.

In wishing to place the NAS/UWT in such a position, it can be argued that the president has misunderstood the nature of union activity and the part that branches may be expected to play in that activity. As Chapter 6 will show, most, if not all, of the work of the local association is a reaction to initiatives taken elsewhere. This, it will be argued, is almost inevitable. The president also appears, from his views about his own position in the local association, not to recognize that his may be an office without the power that a local secretary, potentially, may have, but it is a position of considerable influence. The sub-committee system as it was emerging at this time owed much to the efforts of the president. The extent to which items of business were passed to these sub-committees was also influenced by him (see Chapter 6). The concern which he expressed about involving more members and about delegating more responsibility was shared by other officers although the president would, perhaps, want to go further than many others in this respect. His views, therefore, while leading him into conflict with other officers about the extent to which changes should take place, were not especially different

from those of many other officers although the president thought that they were (NAS/UWT,1977c).

The president was in conflict with both the local officers and the national guidelines on workplace representation over the extent to which he wanted to use the re-structuring of the local organization to shift the burden of casework away from the secretary and towards other, less experienced officers. He recognized this, pointing out that staff at headquarters appeared to have some difficulty in identifying what was meant by official action and what part the various representatives of the NAS/UWT should play in that action. While, as was seen in the previous chapter, there is some ambiguity here, the guidelines are far less equivocal than the president chose to believe. The limitations on the role of the school representative are there to be seen even if the expectations built up about that role do not accord with those limitations. The correct procedure for defining and handling disputes is also outlined. The need for a confidential service, as well as the limitations placed on active involvement in casework by anyone other than the local secretary by these guidelines, seem to preclude the possibility of delegating much, if any, casework to other officers. The informal methods adopted by the local secretary for carrying out his casework would also make this difficult although questions might be raised about the extent to which these were the only available methods available to officers involved in such work. The secretary certainly argued that they were the most effective in the circumstances (NAS/UWT,1977c).

The general tenor of this critique of the role of the secretary was that the secretary was not sufficiently accountable to executive members for what he did and how he operated. The president also argued that this was true of the executive itself which, he believed, should be more accountable to members for what it did. He was not clear, however, about how this might be done and, it may be argued, his views did not take account of the actual processes of justification and legitimation which can be identified within the local association and which will be discussed in subsequent chapters. It is clear that the president saw school representatives as significant in bringing the opinion of the rank-and-file members to bear on the executive and in representing executives' actions to members. To enable them to fulfil this role more effectively than was the case at that time, representatives would need further training as well as a change in their own perception of their school representative role.

In spite of his reservations about these aspects of the local association's work, the president believed that during his term of office the association had become a more effective instrument for the representation of its members. In individual schools many members of the larger executive were becoming more confident and better informed and, as a result, more active, a view shared by both the treasurer and secretary but with more expressions of apprehension than was the case with the president. Groups of members in a few of the larger schools were beginning to combine under the guidance of an executive member in an attempt to influence conditions of service inside their schools and, in doing so, were receiving support from officers and executive. At LEA level the president felt that it was difficult to be clear about how much the NAS/UWT actually achieved because it was only one voice in a union chorus. Other officers might have argued

that casework successes were an indication of the extent to which the local association was effective in representing the interests of its members.

Here one of the paradoxes which were evident in the president's view on the local association emerges. He pinpointed a major difficulty for one union acting in a group. To be heard and to be able to have influence, the officers of the association need to have a range of informal contacts within the LEA. In Coventry this was not easy because of the extent to which elected members tended to keep a relatively tight control over the officers of the LEA and the explicit policy to which the officers were continually directed. Up to this time the NAS/UWT had had little contact with the elected representatives of the LEA although this was about to change. The president's experience led him to believe that contact with officers in the Coventry LEA was not easy. The Director, who, himself, was frequently unobtainable, gave his subordinates only limited scope for initiative. At assistant director level, it was often difficult to identify the specific functions of officers. This meant that speedy access to the right person could be difficult to achieve. It was often necessary to contact people who were available rather than those who fulfilled the relevant function. Thus the LEA and the way in which it operated created problems of some magnitude for the Coventry NAS/UWT and effectively limited the extent to which the local association could take any initiative, a view at odds with the president's opinions about how the local organization should develop.

In the face of such difficulties the president argued that the appropriate NAS/UWT response ought not to be one of militancy but should rest upon an approach which was based on co-operating with the LEA as far as possible. He suggested that the LEA was consistently trying to maintain its provision of resources and staff for the education service. As long as it did this there was little to gain from confrontation. At the same time the other major union in the LEA, the NUT, appeared to be moving to the left politically and, as a result, was increasingly unwilling to co-operate with the LEA thus leaving an important gap which the NAS/UWT could fill to the advantage of its members. Such attempts to be accommodatong towards the LEA formed an important part of Coventry NAS/UWT practice but this was linked with the practice on the part of all officers, but particularly the secretary, of developing informal contacts with LEA officers as part of their activities as officers on the union, as well as other aspects of their work such as teacher representatives on the Consultative Joint Committee, (CJS), of the LEA. On this committee the secretary of the NAS/UWT was an elected representative of all teachers in the city, not just his own members. He had access to information and to officers of the LEA which might have been denied to him were he not a member of that committee. Any attempt to limit the role played by the secretary might have limited his chances of being elected in the city-wide elections to the CJC and, in so doing, limited his own effectiveness and that of the NAS/UWT in Coventry. Yet the limitations sought by the president might have had just such an effect.

The president of the local association had, then, a set of views about his own office and about the functioning of the local association based on his experiences prior to becoming president and on his experience of office holding within the local association. These views were not always shared by officer colleagues. Nor were they always in accord with national policy. While his analysis of the problems faced by the Coventry NAS/UWT appears to be thorough, consistent and very similar to that of other key officers, his proposed solutions contain difficulties and paradoxes. His view of his own office was such that he did not entirely appear to recognize its potential for influence within the local association. In much the same way he failed to account for the influence which the rank-and-file membership could exert should it so desire. Nevertheless, his perceptions of what the local and national association ought to be doing are very much within the mainstream of NAS/UWT thinking. His opinions about how the local association itself should conduct its affairs contained what might be regarded as a less than accurate analysis of the essential nature of trade union activity. They also led him to a paradoxical position of wishing to restrict the very activities of the secretary which enabled him to develop those informal contacts with the officers of the LEA upon which much of his effectiveness in representing the interests of the membership depended. Thus, although he was initially attracted to the NAS/UWT by its militant stance, he was able to support a local strategy based on establishing co-operation with officers of the LEA. In this he had much in common with other officers and the rank-and-file.

The Treasurer

Just as the president's experiences had shaped his views on the activities of the NAS/UWT, the same can be said of the treasurer, the head of a primary school. He was by far the longest serving of the key officers. By 1977 he had been treasurer in Coventry for 26 years and treasurer to the Midland Federation for 16 years. During this time he witnessed the growth of the local association and worked with eight local secretaries before the present one. Over this period of time he found himself playing a variety of roles including, in his own words, 'the father confessor', to many secretaries, all of whom appeared to need somebody upon whom to lean (NAS/UWT,1977d). For many years the treasurer had been the only permanent senior officer of the association. As a result of this he thought that his role within the local association had been more significant than might normally be the case. As the existing secretary had grown in stature, the treasurer saw his own position declining to proper proportions.

The role of local association treasurer had, in any case, changed significantly over the last few years because of the changes in the way in which subscriptions were collected and members identified. These changes, discussed in Chapter 3, meant that the local treasurer was no longer an active agent in the collection of subscriptions and the recording of members. He became a passive recipient of money and information from headquarters. While this did remove the strain of collecting subscriptions from the local treasurer it also meant that a significant proportion of money due to the local association did not reach it until near the end of the financial year. The main financial commitments of the local association have to be met in the first

part of the year. It is necessary, therefore, to be able to maintain a balance of about £400 in hand. This placed some strain both on the treasurer and on the financial resources at local level.

The procedure for collecting subscriptions meant that the treasurer no longer had immediate information about the number and location of the local membership. He did receive a computer print-out from headquarters in March and a weekly list of changes of address and new members. For accurate local information, however, he relied heavily on the membership secretary and the school representatives. The membership secretary was required to keep an up-to-date list of all changes in membership but this task, difficult as it was, was made even more difficult because the membership information was processed on the basis of the financial year whilemost of the changes in membership took place in September, the start of the educational year. Membership lists were, therefore, likely to be out-of-date for most of the time.

This could be overcome by efficient school representatives. They received from the treasurer a list of their current workplace membership at the start of the educational year so that it could be brought up-to-date in every way. Moves, additions and changes of address should all be recorded and returned to the local treasurer. These forms, however, were not always returned promptly if at all. Of those that did come back, some were wrongly completed. In the middle of February the treasurer provided school representatives with information on three categories of member: those who had not paid their subscription for the current year; those who did not pay the

previous year's subscription and who should do so and who should arrange to pay the current subscription later; those who owe subscriptions for the two previous years. This latter group were technically no longer NAS/UWT members but they could re-join by paying the subscription for one year now and then paying the remainder at a later date. School representatives were expected to encourage members to pay their subscriptions. The treasurer sent a reminder to representatives early in the summer term. Finally he attempted to make personal contact with the defaulting members. From the treasurer's point of view this procedure appeared to be fairly effective. Its success or otherwise depended on the extent to which the treasurer could be provided with accurate information about the movements of members. In a union which was as concerned about its membership size as the NAS/UWT, this part of the treasurer's activities had a high priority but this was not always recognized by school representatives and so the information which the treasurer required was not always forthcoming.

In his approach to this aspect of his work the treasurer of the Coventry NAS/UWT was, perhaps, not unlike that of most other local association treasurers. In another respect, however, his priorities were different from those of other treasurers. He held the view that it should be the treasurer-secretary combination who should make the main policy decisions for the local association. He saw the president as a relatively transient figure who was unable to provide the required degree of continuity. The treasurer and the secretary, on the other hand, tend to be relatively permanent officials and should, therefore, take the responsibility for formulating policy along agreed lines.

This view fails to recognize that the president is likely to hold office of some kind for at least three years and, given the size of the enlarged local executive and the small size of the local membership, it was unlikely that anyone holding the office of president would be lost to the executive once his or her period of office holding was over. In any case the constitution of the executive gives it powers of co-option which it may well use to enable it to benefit from the experience of such an officer.

The treasurer claimed that he shared a common view with the secretary on the local association's activities. Together they may decide to approach candidates to stand for election to office for executive and officer positions. They both wanted to conduct the association's activities so as to avoid prejudicing relationships with the LEA and they may, according to the treasurer, both be involved in attempting to solve specific problems in schools, although these were mainly primary schools. The treasurer saw this aspect of his work as necessary in order to attempt to take some of the strain off the local secretary and, in so doing, to create for the secretary sufficient flexibility to cope with his extremely diverse role. The treasurer, like the president, recognized that the secretary carried the burden of responsibility for most of the work of the local association, but his response to this was somewhat different. He did not wish to limit what the secretary did. Rather he wanted to create a structure which would support the secretary in the performance of his duties.

To this extent the treasurer saw some value in establishing a limited series of sub-committees although he wanted the primary-secondary divisions within the education service reflected in such committees. He also favoured the establishment of school meetings to

which executive members and officers might report, rather than meetings to take school initiated action. The treasurer made it clear that he thought it more important that the officers were able to influence members rather than that members should influence officers. He did acknowledge, however, that it was the responsibility of officers to explain and justify their actions more fully to members, and that the enlarged executive was providing a useful forum for doing this. He did not recognize, however, the extent to which the provision of such explanations and justifications were, in fact, part of a two-way process of influencing and legitimating actions.

On the other hand the treasurer was clear that the main function of the local association was to look after the interests of its members both collectively and individually, rather than to concern itself with the interests of children in schools. Thus he believed that casework should be carried out swiftly and effectively and that legal protection, the main reason for which many teachers join any union in the treasurer's view, should be readily available. Even the nature of the education service is not, in his opinion, the legitimate concern of the NAS/UWT. It should limit itself to the protection of salaries and conditions of members within whatever structure exists, although this ought to include any activity necessary to ensure that the service was adequately financed and resourced. This could involve officers in local negotiations over decisions as capitation and appropriate staffing levels which are determined locally. In Coventry these discretionary areas of educational expenditure were, at this time, implemented almost to the full so conflict over these matters with LEA officers was rare. Over more general matters such as conditions of

service the treasurer argued that the local association was in a position of having to respond to LEA initiatives and to the actions of individual headteachers. It was not possible, he believed, for the local association to initiate issues and to play a more positive role in formulating local education policy even if this were appropriate. He also thought that the LEA officers regarded the NAS/UWT as a more stable, moderate and accommodating organization than other local teachers' unions and wanted to reinforce this view of the local association wherever possible, recognizing that this involved adopting centralist policies most of the time.

His experience of union activity in Coventry had enabled him to establish a range of informal contacts within the LEA and to be able to identify which LEA officers had particular responsibilities. He argued, however, that officers of the LEA devoted far too little time to meeting teachers' representatives. He pointedout that the problem of insufficient access to LEA officers could, to some extent, be overcome by experienced and well known local NAS/UWT officers who were able to develop informal contacts of their own. The treasurer was concerned that people with such potential were not available in any numbers in the Coventry local association. He found it difficult to identify a nucleus of people to whom the responsibility for such posts as treasurer and secretary could be handed, although the effect of the recent changes in the structure of the local association may improve this situation.

The main concerns of the treasurer of the local association, then, tend to relate to financial and membership matters. His approach to these concerns, and also to other union affairs, is

based on the view that the interest of the members should be paramount. His views about the extent to which members ought to be able to express their opinion about where these interests are actually located, appears to be based on paternalism resulting from long service. It may also be based on a pragmatic approach to union activity which recognizes that the local association is rarely in a position to initiate action and, even more rarely, in a position of real strength. He argued that the NAS/UWT ought, at local level, to act on the principle of, 'If you cannot win, leave it' (NAS/UWT,1977d). As was shown in Chapter 2, the national approach to militant activity was very similar. The local secretary also appeared to share this maxim although such a maxium is subject to a variety of extremely flexible interpretations. The treasurer, like the president, subscribes to several sets of perceptions about the nature of union activity which are shared by most other officers and executive members and which are recognized as important by the rank-and-file. These include the importance of members' interests, the need to be accommodating towards LEA policies and practices. These perceptions form part of the processes by which activities were justified and the role of the officers legitimated. At the same time the perceptions helped to minimize the potential conflict between officers.

Conclusion

Two of the key officers in the association are united by broad perceptions generally shared, but at the same time, divided by different views about the specific developments within their local association. The president, wanting to create an atmosphere in which confidence could grow and participation increase, was concerned about the potential for oligarchy which he detected even within the

re-organized structure. The treasurer, anxious to preserve continuity and stability within the local association in order that it might be better able to represent and protect the interests of its members, wanted to extend the influence of the officers over the rank-and-file through the executive and through the use of workplace based meetings.

In their different ways they both under estimated the potential for influence within the local association. The president, in seeing himself as a figurehead, tended not to recognize the extent to which his role as chairman might enable him to influence events. The treasurer, lacking the support of a large workplace group in his small primary school and, perhaps, a little out of touch, therefore, with the effects of the re-organization in the larger schools, minimized the extent to which explaining actions to members placed officers in a position of justifying what they had done and, in so doing, opened the way for an increase in the influence of members over officers. In the event this influence, when exerted, tended to be initiated by workplace groups when they asked for visits from officers. The increased opportunities for participation in the affairs of the association created by its recent re-structuring were, perhaps, not fully recognized by either of these two officers.

Although the president had a less clearly defined role in the local association than did the treasurer, they shared similar views about the nature of that association, its major aims and purposes and the appropriate ways of operating. They did have different opinions about how best to achieve these objectives. The president wanted further moves to restrict the activities of the local secretary, to spread the casework load more widely and to enable the local association to

take the initiative in negotiations with the LEA,even on matters of educational policies. In this he showed a lack of knowledge about the prescriptions surrounding the role of the secretary and the relationships between the local secretary, school representatives and area federation national executive members. He also failed to recognize the essentially re-active nature of trade union activity especially in a small, and relatively powerless local association.

The treasurer, while wanting the local association to move to a more pro-active stance in the conduct of its activites, was more concerned to establish and maintain the position of the local association officers with reference to the rank-and-file. He wanted to support the activities of the secretary rather than to restrict them for, in so doing, he saw himself as having a significant role to play as part of a group of advisors whom the secretary consulted on matters such as casework. In a general way this was already true of the officer group as a whole who, during officers' meetings, were consulted about the generalities, if not the specifics, of casework. He was content to have the concerns of the association restricted to those areas which directly impinged on the payment and conditions of service of members and, these issues apart, was reluctant to have the NAS/UWT involved in matters of educational policy.

It is apparent from their perceptions of their own roles within the local association and their statements about the local association's secretary, that both the treasurer and the president recognize the secretary of the Coventry NAS/UWT as the most significant of the officer group. They differed in their views about the extent to which they regarded this centrality as desirable, but both saw that

the nature of his work which, in turn, derived from the nature of the activities of the local association itself, meant that it was not possible to establish or sustain a tight control over the part played by the secretary within the local association. Some of his work was confidential, while much of it demanded that the secretary responded to situations as and when they arrived. He was also responsible for providing much of the information upon which the executive committee depended for its functioning.

It is the executive committee, newly enlarged and, as a group, relatively inexperienced, which is the vehicle upon which the responsibility for developing processes of representation is carried. It is against the background of the meetings of the executive that the role played by the secretary, as well as those of other officers, can more clearly be understood. It is through an examination of the work of the executive committee that the nature of trade union activity, the patterns of control and influence which inform that activity, and the internal and external relationships which are a product of that activity, can be brought into sharper focus. From this, an informed analysis of the role of the local association's secretary can be developed, and the patterns of participation and legitimation within the local association examined in some detail.

CHAPTER SIX

LOCAL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATION

THE EXCUTIVE MEETINGS

Introduction

The re-organization of the Coventry NAS/UWT placed an increased emphasis on the executive committee which was elevated from a fairly small meeting of officers to the major vehicle for representing members' views to officers. The branch meeting remained, but only as an unimportant part of the overall structure. It was at the executive meetings that most of the main business of the local association was considered. It was through the executive meetings that members raised issues which were important to them and it was to the executive meetings that the officers came in order to describe, explain and justify those actions taken on behalf of the association, and to its membership.

The views of the president and the treasurer about the role of the executive were discussed in the previous chapter. Although these views differed in some respects both of these officers recognized the importance of the executive in the representative process within the local association. This same view was shared by the secretary, as Chapter 7 will show. The executive members were seen by the officers, therefore, to be a crucial part of the structure through which members' views were transmitted to the officers and through which officers obtain legitimation for their actions from representatives of the members. Providing a forum for receiving explanations of those actions carried out in the name of the Coventry NAS/UWT, challenging those actions, or providing legitimation for them was seen by the officers as the important functions of the local executive at its meetings.

The constitution of the Coventry NAS/UWT says little about the functions of its executive although it does define its membership in the ways outlined in Chapter 3 (NAS/UWT,1976f). All the officers listed in the constitution, are automatically members of the executive and the only indication about the function of the executive and the role of the officers on it is to be found in Rule 6c, (NAS/UWTm1976f), which states that the executive should 'control the affairs of the association subject to ratification at a general meeting'. Much remained, therefore, to be worked out in practice at the meetings, through the sub-committee structure and through negotiations between officers, executive members and the rank-and-file. It is clear, however, that the executive meetings had become the arena within which the business of the local association was conducted and offered for scrutiny by a wider audience of members.

This arena, shaped in the first instance, by the organization of the meetings themselves; the packaging, presentation and flow of information; the roles played by the various participants, is where issues are raised, defined and dealt with. This arena is where actions, if not always formulated, are normally legitimated, the exception being the secrtary's casework. This arena is where the officers seek to influence the executive members and, through them, the rank-and-file and where the rank-and-file, through their members and through personal interventions, seek to influence the affairs of the association. It is in this arena that the nature of trade union activity as it is conducted by the Coventry NAS/UWT can best be observed and identified through an analysis of what the association, through its executive, actually does over a period of time.

Such an analysis ought not only to reveal the nature of trade union activity as carried out by the Coventry NAS/UWT. It ought also also to provide an indication of how the affairs of the association are controlled and influenced by those concerned, and how participation within the local association was facilitated by the re-structured executive committee. It has been suggested that participation, control and influence may be approached through an examination of the behaviour of officers on the executive (Tannenbaum and Schmidt,1973). Such an approach would concern itself with the activities of the officers of the executive and would explore the ways in which they attempted to control decision-making. These attempts at control might include making a decision and announcing it, explaining a decision to the executive, presenting a tentative decision which is subject to change, defining the limits of a decision but asking members to decide, or passing the decision over to members of the executive. This approach recognizes that participation might include a range of activities including being informed as a right and being involved in the actual taking of decisions. As will be seen, the Coventry NAS/UWT executive meetings included, at various times, most of these elements of participation. They also included other elements which are not to be found in this analysis but which relate to the nature of the justifications and explanations given, to shared perceptions of appropriate behaviour and to a shared understanding of the nature of trade union activity which, because of its essentially re-active nature, frequently requires that decisions and actions are given some form of post facto legitimation.

Much of the work of the local association involved responding to issues and events which are external to the association and not within its immediate control. This fact shaped the participation of officers and executive members in the activities of the local executive. It also influenced the extent to which events could be controlled or influenced as well as limiting the degree to which officers' activities, especially those of the secretary, could be directly called to account within the formal framework of a meeting. The executive meetings were, therefore, important in other ways for it was at these meetings that those notions of acceptability and appropriateness which inform the behaviour of all concerned with the local association were negotiated. By looking at the structure and control of meetings, the part played in the proceddings by the sub-committees of the executive and the ways in which those important external issues were handled, it is possible to develop an understanding of officer-member relationships within the Coventry NAS/UWT, as well as of the issues which concerned those officers and members. From this understanding a clear picture of the nature of the executive itself emerges together with an insight into the general nature of trade union activity.

Structure and Control of Meetings

There are two main factors which structure and control the Coventry NAS/UWT executive meetings. These are the contents of the agenda and the part played by the officers in the proceedings. The agenda provides the formal pattern which is followed by every meeting (Appendix D, Table 2). This pattern hardly ever changed. It consisted of seven basic items with the addition of any number of other items that were thought to be necessary by the secretary or the minutes secretary

who drew up the agenda between them. This order tended to be followed unless objections were raised at the start of the meeting when the agenda was distributed. The officers had, at their officers' meeting, already been acquainted with the agenda by the secretary. The effect of having a standard agenda was that some routine items tended to have priority over other, more important matters because the former were predictable while the latter were not. Changes could be made but, as Appendix D, Table 3 shows, this was rare. Much, therefore, depended on the judgement exercised by the secretary over the importance of particular items of business.

This judgement was particular noticeable in the way in which the first main agenda item was handled by the secretary. This item, 'Correspondence', was the only one over which the secretary exercised complete control because all the relevant information was addressed to him. If one purpose of the executive committee meetings is to transmit information to members through their executive members, then this agendum item is an important part of that process,(Appendix D, Table 4). The secretary used this part of the agenda as a clearing house for information which did not fit into other parts of the agenda or which, perhaps, introduced issues which may be considered later in the meeting. Many letters, bulletins from headquarters or other items of information were circulated to members during the meetings. As a result many, especially the newer members of the executive who, as yet, had not developed criteria by which to evaluate the importance of various communications, felt over-whelmed by the amount of information which was being circulated at the meetings. There was too little time to absorb this material, some of which was quite complex, if members were to play an active part in the meeting.

The provision of information to officers, members and school representatives was a necessary part of the activity of the local association. Nevertheless there was, at times, more information circulating in a meeting than anyone could assimilate. Letters and bulletins tended to receive a brief glance as the meeting moved on to other items on the agenda. Much of this material went into the local bulletin and could be re-read at a later date but some form of referencing of these items of correpondence might have helped executive members and school representatives to trace relevant information when they needed it. Other secretaries may have been more selective in what they included in this item but the Coventry secretary felt that such an approach might lead to charges of censorship or of failing to communicate adequately. This group of officers, and the secretary in particular, had chosen to saturate the executive with information rather than risk being accused of starving it.

The 'Correspondence' item was intended to generate awareness. So was the next item, 'Reports', although these tended to be far more outward focused than the previous one and were less subject to control by the secretary although he still played an important part in the proceedings as did the other officers. This item shows how, over the period of this study, the sub-committee structure developed and came to play an increasingly important part in the business of the executive. At the same time it can also be seen that officers and members other than the secretary took over the function of reporting back to the executive about the work of these sub-committees. These committees will be examined in more detail below but it is important, for the moment, to recognize that these sub-committees were in the process of establishing themselves as part of the participative and representative machinery

of the local association. The other reports to be found here were from committees on which the Coventry NAS/UWT was represented either as a teacher's union or as one union among many in Coventry.

Many of the agenda items which follow the 'Reports' item appear frequently on the agenda although not necessarily on every one. Others appear on a series of agendas and then disappear (Appendix D, Table 3). The former category of items tended to represent those items which were important to the local association and which needed regular attention or which are of permanent concern but only arise spasmodically. The second type of items are of immediate importance to the local association but are such that the issues raised by them can be dealt with in a relatively short period of time. These items are both important, as will be argued below, for the way in which they help to illustrate what the main concerns and interests of the officers and members actually are. This is also true of the 'Any Other Business' and 'Matters Arising' items (Appendix D, Tables 5 and 6). The former provides an indication of issues which caused concern to individual executive members while the latter more nearly reflected. the major concerns of the local association as a whole.

The officers were far more active in raising questions about 'Matters Arising' than were other executive members but the reverse was true for 'Any Other Business' items. Most of the officers made major contributions to the executive meetings but, as the collection of tables in Appendix D shows, these contributions varied over time, according to issues and according to the role of the particular officer. Where, for example, an officer was chairman of a sub-committee, his contribution to the proceedings of the executive increased as the functions and concerns of that sub-committee developed. The same was true of

ordinary members of the executive. Here, quite naturally in a newly structured organization, it took time for certain members to gain confidence, acquire information and form opinions.

Between June 1976 and July 1977 a number of changes can be identified in the part played by officers and members in the meetings. The contributions made by the officers came less and less frequently from the secretary and increasingly involved a wide cross section of the officer group. This is not to say that the secretary was any the less important or influential in the affairs of the executive or the wider association. A more likely interpretation is that the secretary was concentrating his efforts in those areas which he believed to be crucially important to the interests of the members. This change is, in part, a function of the increasing regularity with which items were being referred to sub-committees for consideration. At the same time other executive members were beginning to make more significant contributions, a product, no.doubt, of their growing confidence and knowledge about the local association and its affairs. The sub-committees were also instrumental in that process.

These changes took place within a framework of a formal agenda which both structured the meetings and facilitated participation by officers and members alike. The meetings were well conducted, largely thanks to the effective and sympathetic chairmanship of the president who, perhaps because of his own views about the role of the secretary within the local association, encouraged as much involvement in the proceedings on the part of ordinary executive members as possible. He also tried to ensure that, whenever it was appropriate, items of business were referred to the appropriate sub-committee for

action. In so doing he intended to keep the business of the meetings moving while providing material upon which the sub-committees could work, thus gradually changing the way in which the business of the local association might be conducted.

The Sub-Committees: Information, Participation and Representation

The president of the local association saw the establishing of a series of sub-committees as one way of moving towards the solution of a number of problems which he believed faced the Coventry NAS/UWT. The treasurer and, as will be seen in the next chapter, the secretary, had similar, if less radical views on the sub-committees. In the early stages of their introduction, no one was sure how best to use them, although it was clear that they were intended to remove some of the pressure of the work from the secretary and his assistants who were to provide information to these sub-committees which would, in turn, report back to the executive meeting. Much, but not all, of the work of the sub-committees was initiated in this way, although the president, at least, hoped that the sub-committees would, in time, begin to initiate items.

The policy of establishing sub-committees, written into the local association's constitution, (NAS/UWT,1976f), began to be implemented in July 1976 when as a result of an officer's meeting the previous week, the president proposed to an executive committee meeting that a Conditions of Service Sub-Committee and an Education Sub-Committee be set up (NAS/UWT,1976g). The Conditions of Service Sub-Committee was to have five members, one of whom should be the retiring president who would also be chairman. At this time, however, there was no retiring president and so it was agreed that the current president should act as chairman. The Education Sub-Committee was

smaller, having three members, one of whom would be the local secretary because he was most likely to have access to relevant information through his membership of LEA committees. In the Summer Term of 1977 two further committees were formed, a Recruitment Sub-Committee in May and a Standing Orders Sub-Committee in July (NAS/UWT,1977k, 1977m).

The first of these sub-committees to be used was the Conditions of Service Sub-Committee (CSSC). This was probably because its formation coincided with concern in schools over the application of recent government legislation on health and safety at work. The CSSC had two major tasks. The first was to handle all the information from NAS/UWT headquarters which had appeared on this subject. The second was to consult the LEA in order to discuss the application of this legislation in schools. This it did in October 1976,(NAS/UWT,1976j), and so provided the first of very few examples of a sub-committee taking the initiative in dealing with the employers. This meeting was part of a process of attempting to define areas of responsibility with the LEA but, as yet, there had been no cases in Coventry in which matters of health and safety in schools formed an important part. The CSSC was helping to prepare the association for such an eventuality by March 1977, by working through and summarizing a comprehensive set of notes on aspects of health and safety in schools which had been received from headquarters (NAS/UWT,1977i). This summary was published in the local bulletin and copies were sent to all schools for the safety officers who should, by this time, have been identified.

A case based, in part, on this leglislation was not long in coming. Blue asbestos was discovered in the roof of a school at which the CSSC's chairman taught. It became an issue for the Coventry NAS/UWT when it appeared that the LEA were not following the proper procedure

or, at least, not fulfilling promises to send copies of the inspector's report on the state of the school building to the school and to the local association. Nobody from the LEA had been present at the inspection and no assurances had been given about the safety of the building. It became clear during the discussion of this issue at the executive meeting that it was possible that several other schools built at the same time, in the same area by the same firm, might also be affected by blue asbestos (NAS/UWT,1977k). The CSSC was asked by the secretary on behalf of the executive to obtain more information about this problem in other schools in other areas while, at the same time, the secretary approached the LEA for some assurance about the safety of the school in question. By the end of June 1977, the local association had received verbal assurances from an assistant director of the LEA which were based on an inspection carried out by the firm which had built the school. The LEA also agreed to have a further, larger scale inspection carried out by an independent inspector (NAS/UWT,1977m).

It was coincidental that the chairman of the CSSC happened to be on the staff of this particular school since any health and safety officer or school representative would probably have brought the matter to the attention of the local association. Had the CSSC not existed, however, the situation might have had to be dealt with entirely by the secretary. In the event, the local association was prepared for such an issue through the work of the CSSC which had provided relatively easy access for the secretary to the relevant information, thereby relieving him of much of the work of obtaining and interpreting information, and of processing it so that other members could use it.

This sub-committee had also began, in a small way, to initiate contacts with the LEA. It was not, however, left to handle the health and safety issue when such a case occurred and its role appeared mainly to be that of processing information.

Much the same was true of the Education Sub-Committee (ESC). For several months after it was established it did very little. It was then asked to examine the documents relating to the proposed merger between the local college of education and the polytechnic. The NAS/UWT had two members at the college but it also had a wider interest since teachers' organizations throughout the city were keen to use the changes in teacher training to establish a much closer control over training locally. The ESC provided information on this situation which was then published in the local bulletin for the membership at large. The secretary had access to other information as part of his role on other, non-union committees which, although he used it as background information when reporting on the proposed merger, was never passed directly to the ESC.

The ESC was more closely involved in matters directly related to the professional concerns of teachers in spite of the typical NAS/UWT position on such matters. It was the ESC which was used to examine a proposal from the LEA to introduce a standard record card into all infant schools. This was being resisted by teachers. The ESC, after examining the record card, reported that there would need to be over 21,000 entries for an average sized class each year (NAS/UWT,1977j). The secretary attempted to contact the Director of Education who, according to the secretary, appeared to be reluctant to discuss the proposals with teachers. This issue was

finally resolved when a representative of the LEA met teachers and it was agreed to revise the document and send it back to selected schools for a further and extended trial. Again the sub-committee processed the information but the secretary made the required contacts with the employers. This issue also provides an interesting illustration of the extent the local NAS/UWT was willing to involve itself in the professional concerns of teachers. The major objection to the record card was not the extent to which it impinged on the professional activities of teachers but the extent to which it appeared to make unreasonable demands on the time of some NAS/UWT members in infant schools.

The record card issue, like most matters dealt with by the executive and its sub-committees, was initiated by the LEA. The local association was forced to respond to this initiative by attempting to meet employer's representatives before the matter could be taken any further. It was an essentially local matter and not a response to national educational policy, or even to national NAS/UWT policy. This may have been because most of the educational policy relevant to work in local schools was, at that time, the product of local education authority policy. At the same time NAS/UWT members strongly resisted attempts by their national association to involve itself in areas which they regarded as being matters of professional concern such as curriculum. These areas were not regarded by the Coventry local association as being appropriate for the national association to comment on. When, in his inaugural speech, the National President of the NAS/UWT expressed a view on the content of the core curriculum the Coventry NAS/UWT reacted angrily. The ESC was asked to formulate a letter expressing the strongest disapproval of this excursion

of the national executive into curriculum matters. This letter reminded the National President that the prime function of the NAS/UWT is to represent its members and to provide services for them, not to become involved in educational decision-making. Such decisions should, the letter argued, be left to teachers and parents,(NAS/UWT,1977k). It was not the nature of the comments themselves which aroused the anger of the local executive, it was the fact that the National President had sought fit to comment at all on an area which was not regarded by the members as an appropriate area of concern for the union.

The ESC was not the only sub-committee to find that activities at national level incurred the disapproval of the local members in its sphere of interest. The Recruitment Sub-Committee,(RSC), found itself in a very similar situation for different reasons. The National Association, continually concerned with membership figures, initiated a recruitment drive to increase membership to 100,000, as a result of which, local associations were asked to increase their recruitment efforts among newly qualified teachers and, more controversally, among lapsed NAS/UWT members who may, by now, have joined other unions as well as those teachers who were not in TUC affiliated unions. While the local executive supported the efforts of the RSC to recruit new members from among students still in college and new teachers, it was prepared to go no further. Several executive committee members refused to follow the instructions from headquarters in their schools for two reasons. Firstly the service to members was not improving as the size of the union increased. Secondly the local executive felt that this was a matter for local autonomy rather than for following instructions from headquarters which might result in a struggle for membership with other unions which the local NAS/UWT may not be able to win,(NAS/UWT,1977l). The RSC

was instructed by a majority vote to continue with its own preparations for recruiting new members among students and new teachers and to ignore the request instructions from headquarters. This was in an area where the NAS/UWT had a long standing and legitimate interest and which, even at local level, was regarded as of central importance.

The setting up of the RSC can, itself, be seen as an indication of the importance attached to membership size in Coventry. Representation at local and regional level on external committees such as examination boards depended on the local membership statistics. This led the secretary to argue, (NAS/UWT, 1977j), that recruitment was too important to the local association for this to be the responsibility of one person and that a Recruitment Committee was necessary. He wanted this committee to produce locally focused recruitment literature which would reflect the particular ethos of the NAS/UWT, emphasising its concern with the career teacher, its service to members and its views about the nature of activities which it regarded as appropriate for the teachers' union. It was this literature which was used in the recruitment campaign mentioned above.

The RSC, like other sub-committees, was an adjunct to the work of the local association as identified by the local secretary. It provided services, in this case planning and producing recruitment material, and organizing a recruitment campaign which might, in the past, have been done by the secretary himself. It also provided opportunities for six executive members, three of whom were not officers, to become involved in the activities of the local association.

This sub-committee, because of its focus on young teachers and students still at college, contained a probationary teacher and another in her second year (NAS/UWT,1977j). It remains to be seen how far the involvement of younger members in the sub-committee system enables the Coventry NAS/UWT to find, from its ranks, members who might, in time, become officers of the local association.

The sub-committee system provided opportunities for participation for 21 executive members who might not, otherwise, have had such opportunities (NAS/UWT,1977l). It also had the effect of relieving the secretary of some of the more routine, information processing and planning work that he might previously have had to do himself. The development of the sub-committees, therefore, did have some effect on the influence of the secretary with the executive. He used the sub-committees as an extension of his own activities and, to a lesser extent, as an extension of the activities of other officers. This tended to enable the secretary to be better informed on various metters, for example on health and safety. His decisions and actions were, therefore, less likely to be challenged on the executive, at least until those involved in sub-committee work gained more experience and independence.

Participation, the provision of experience, the processing of information and the provision of support for officers were all significant aspects of the work of the Coventry NAS/UWT sub-committee system. The system, by providing this service, enabled officers to be better prepared. This was especially true, as will be seen in the next chapter, of the secretary and his casework. On the executive, however, the assistance given to him by the sub-committee system had two important effects. Firstly it tended to give his actions within the local

assocation more legitimacy within the executive and, secondly, it enabled him to represent the association more effectively on committees which were external to the local association and to deal more readily with a wide range of external issues. In spite of this, however, the secretary could be challenged by the rank-and-file because of the structuring of participation within the local association over such issues.

External Relationships

The business which was passed to the sub-committees indicates the extent to which much of the work of the Coventry NAS/UWT had its origins outside the local association. The functioning of these sub-committees reveals how much importance was attached to creating situations in which the officers of the local association could respond on behalf of the Coventry NAS/UWT to such external initiatives. The processing of information by these sub-committees, their part in the representative structure of the local association and the extent to which members of the executive werebetter able to participate in the business of the association through the sub-committee system all helped to establish the legitimacy of those actions carried out by the officers of the Coventry NAS/UWT.

The reactions of these officers on behalf of the local association as a response to initiatives taken elsewhere in the education service or by the national association serve, as has already been shown, to highlight the major concerns of the local association itself and to illustrate how far the Coventry NAS/UWT has developed a locally based approach to the situations which it faces. These concerns and approaches

are illustrated even more clearly when seen against the background of the network of external relationships with which the Coventry NAS/UWT is involved and from which many of the situations to which it has to respond actually emerge.

These external relationships are presented to the executive meetings in two ways. Those which are part of a sustained, formal contact such as CJC membership, are the subject of reports in much the same way as were the internal sub-committees. The trend in presenting these reports of external committee business followed that of the presentation of sub-committee reports in that the practice was developed of encouraging a range of officers to become involved in presenting the reports of external committees as opposed to them being delivered almost exclusively by the secretary as was the case initially. This move tended to be restricted to officers and did not normally include ordinary executive members but opportunities were certainly created to spread participation more widely within the officer group.

Some important issues resulted from events in some parts of the external environment of the Coventry NAS/UWT which were not subject to regular reports at executive meetings. These frequently appeared as special items on the executive meeting's agenda and were, perhaps, even less predictable and controllable by the local association than those emanating from the external formal meetings. This is not to argue, however, that the external relationships with which the local NAS/UWT found itself dealing produced events which were entirely unpredictable. These relationships involved a limited number of groups such as the LEA, NUPE, the Trades Council and the NUT. The NAS/UWT already had its own perceptions about the interests of its members and how best they should be fostered, as the previous sections in this chapter and the previous chapters in this study have shown. These factors

helped to shape the way in which officers of the Coventry NAS/UWT approach the issues which arise from these external relationships. The approaches adopted by the officers, in turn, tended to reflect the special concerns of the local association.

This was certainly true of the way in which the local association's affiliation to the Campaign for Educational Advance, (CEA), was handled in 1976. This group, started in Coventry by the combined action of the NAS/UWT, NUT and NATFHE to oppose cuts in educational expenditure, had the NUT secretary as its chairman and the NAS/UWT secretary as its vice chairman. The NAS/UWT affiliated to it as a result of a proposal put to an executive meeting by the local secretary (NAS/UWT,1976g). At this meeting the secretary gave details of a CEA meeting which, it was proposed, would take place in the following October and at which Terry Casey would be the principal speaker. Eventually this public meeting took place in November 1976 to coincide with the National Education Week. The local association used its resources to publicize the meeting and members were urged to attend. When the final details of this meeting were reported to the executive meeting it was also reported that the Director of Education had agreed to meet Terry Casey (NAS/UWT,1976i).

Even before the CEA meeting friction was developing between the NAS/UWT and people described by the local secretary as left wing members of the NUT over the NAS/UWT's approach to education cuts. This dispute had split the CEA organizing committee. The NUT group on that committee wanted Casey publicly to oppose all proposed cuts in educational spending. The national stance of the NAS/UWT was, typically, concerned with its members interests at the expense of other parts of the education service. The position was based on the view that in the current climate cuts in educational expenditure were inevitable and that, therefore, the role of the NAS/UWT should be to

minimize the effects of these cuts on the membership by trying to direct them away from key areas of education. Hence the teacher-pupil ratio should be protected at all costs while capitation at existing levels should be defended. Cuts in areas such as school meals and lunch time supervision ought to be viewed acceptable if cuts were inevitable. This was, in fact, the view that Casey put to the CEA public meeting, albeit in fairly general terms.

This caused considerable dissention on the CEA organizing committee. The criticism to which Casey and the Coventry NAS/UWT were subjected by some NUT members resulted in the question of the association's affiliation to the CEA being placed on the agenda of the next executive meeting (NAS/UWT,1976j). This had been discussed at an officer's meeting the previous week. The president proposed a motion to the effect that the Coventry NAS/UWT should end its affiliation to the CEA. This was seconded by the secretary. The president argued that the local association should no longer be affiliated to the CEA, not because of the criticisms levelled at Casey, but because the CEA was dominated by members of left wing political groups with no direct interest in education but who wanted to use the CEA to oppose all public expenditure cuts for political reasons. These groups, he claimed, were based on the NUT and on NUPE, and were changing the CEA from an educational organization to a political pressure group over which the NAS/UWT could not exert any significant influence. The president argued that the NAS/UWT was a trade union with the sole responsibility of representing its members and protecting their interests, and not a politically orientated group. This view was unanimously supported by the executive whose members expressed concern that the NAS/UWT had ever been associated with an organization which was dominated by the political left.

The spectre of being associated with an organization dominated by the political left was raised again at the very meeting at which the NAS/UWT executive voted to dis-affiliate itself from the CEA. This came as a result of a report from the association's representatives on the Coventry Trades Council on which both the NAS/UWT had been represented for several years. The NUT left the Trades Council in June 1976 but the NAS/UWT continued to be represented by four long serving and experienced members including the secretary. The local executive continued to the provided with reports on the Trades Council until December when it was proposed by two of the officers that the local association should leave the Trades Council on the grounds that membership was of no real value to a serious trade union. The secretary described the Trades Council as a vehicle for trotskyites and communists to carry on interminable disputes. Another of the NAS/UWT's representatives argued that the Trades Council was a very left wing organization which did not support the TUC. By remaining as members, it was argued, there was a danger that the NAS/UWT might be thought to share the political views expressed on the Trades Council by some people. Again the resolution to withdraw was not opposed by any member of the executive.

These two events illustrate the extent to which the Coventry NAS/UWT executive shares a set of common views about the appropriate nature of trade union activity. Whether or not the claims made about the Trades Council and the CEA being dominated by left wing groups were actually true, clearly depends on the political standpoint of the particular observer. What is important about the NAS/UWT's responses to these two situations, however, was the extent to which it was thought to be undesirable for the local association to be seen

to be involved with politically active left wing groups in Coventry. This concern resulted from the wish to maintain the non-radical, co-operative and accommodating stance which the NAS/UWT preferred to adopt towards the LEA and to avoid this position being attacked as a result of the local association becoming involved, even inadvertantly, with groups which might be too far to the political left.

Such a stance was developed in order that the NAS/UWT might be seen to be significantly different from the NUT in Coventry, especially where relationships with the LEA were concerned. These relationships between the NUT, LEA and the Coventry NAS/UWT were usually reported to the executive committee meetings as part of the CJC Reports which were a regular part of the proceedings of the executive meetings. Again the reports of these meetings concentrated on the particular concerns of the NAS/UWT. For example, the secretary's reports on the discussions of the negotiations over the proposed merger between the local college of education and polytechnic focused on the deleterious effect that the negotiations were having on relationships between the teachers' unions and the officers of the LEA, (NAS/UWT,1976g), rather than on the specific content of the merger negotiations.

The representatives of the Coventry NAS/UWT on the CJC saw the role of that committee in a different light from the NUT and LEA representatives on it, perhaps because the NAS/UWT was, because of its size, in a minority on the CJC. The local secretary pointed out this difference in two of his reports, (NAS/UWT,1977h; 1977i), arguing that he regarded it as a consultative committee but not as a vehicle for representing real teacher opinion throughout the city. This, he suggested, could only be arrived at, as in the case of determining the teacher membership of the committee which it was proposed would oversee the college-polytechnic merger, by city wide elections. The LEA and the NUT had both argued that the CJC was an appropriate body

from which such membership should be drawn. This particular issue eventually became irrelevant because of a change in the proposed merger but the NAS/UWT concern about the nature of the CJC remained.

The nature of the CJC and the issues of the NAS/UWT's representation on it came to a head with the appointment of a new chairman of the CJC. The incoming chairman was a member of the NUT and all three NAS/UWT representatives felt that the election had been arranged before the meeting. Since then it was believed by those representatives that the NUT seemed to be manipulating dates and times of meetings to suit themselves and to place the NAS/UWT at a disadvantage. The executive member proposed that the local association's secretary should look closely at the role of the CJC and press for a re-alignment of its membership and increase in NAS/UWT membership on it (NAS/UWT, 1977h; 1977m). It was felt by some members that the whole question of representation might be resolved to the satisfaction of the NAS/UWT by the incoming conservative administration (NAS/UWT,1977k).

Representation and the nature of the consultation process on the CJC were both important issues for the officers and members of the Coventry NAS/UWT. This was partly because, as was widely recognized within the association, it started from a position of relative weakness in all such matters because it was about a third of the size of its rival union, the NUT. It was also significant because of the emphasis placed by both the national and local association on providing a service to members. As the NAS found before it gained representation on the Burnham Committee, without appropriate representation, it was unable to provide a service. The Coventry NAS/UWT did not always find itself at a disadvantage over matters of representation, however. In March the teachers' unions on the CJC in Coventry negotiated an increase

in the time off allowed to union officers in order that they could attend to union business. The NAS/UWT was given 6 sessions, 3 of which went to the secretary while the other 3, were given to the president, treasurer and vice president. The NUT was only allocated 8 sessions to be divided in a similar way (NAS/UWT,1977i). This agreement, like many others, was based on the membership of the two unions and, since the NUT was significantly larger than the NAS/UWT, the NUT was unhappy with the terms of this particular agreement.

The CJC was part of the consultative procedure in the Coventry education service through which teachers' representatives were involved, however indirectly, in the processes of decision-making. If sometimes the teachers' unions disagreed about the nature of their involvement, there were times when they agreed that the appropriate consultative machinery was not being used by the LEA. In June 1977 the local executive was informed of just such a situation (NAS/UWT,1977l). The LEA, at the insistence of the DES, had incorporated the new May Day holiday into the existing holiday pattern in Coventry. This pattern is an unusual one in any case, because of the holiday demands of the car industry which means that term finishes unusually early in July, among other things. There was no official consultation over this on the CJC. Most teachers' representatives were opposed to this new holiday, coming as it did so soon after the Easter Holiday and so soon before the important public examinations. The Coventry NAS/UWT were especially opposed to it representing, as it claimed, the majority of secondary school teachers in the city. The executive committee also reacted strongly to what they saw as a failure to consult the teachers on the CJC or in any other way. At the June executive meeting over half

of the members of the executive reported that their members were concerned about the effect that this holiday might have on examination preparation. The NAS/UWT representatives were instructed to press for consultations on the matter, although the local secretary had already contacted NAS/UWT headquarters and had been informed that nothing could be done about the imposition of the May Day holiday because teachers did not have a contract which specified when they should and should not work. Even so, headquarters advised that attempts to use this day to save heating fuel should be resisted and that one day should be taken off at Easter rather than, say, Christmas. After the LEA had consulted the teachers' representatives on the CJC, the point was eventually conceded to the LEA and the teachers accepted the May Day holiday.

The CJC was one of the main avenues of contact between the NAS/UWT and the LEA. The formal contacts which the secretary had as part of his membership of other committees as well as the formal contacts which he developed and used in his casework activities will be examined in the next chapter. There was one other point of contact with the LEA which the officers of the NAS/UWT were attempting to develop as part of the external relationships of the local association at this time. Political control of the education authority was due to change hands and, as a result, a new Conservative administration was to take office in May 1977. The officers of the NAS/UWT planned to take the initiative and arrange a meeting with the new elected members of the Conservative administration. A sum of £100 was to be spent to entertain the Tory group on the city council (NAS/UWT,1977k). At the discussion of this meeting among the officers there was, as was seen in the previous chapter, some confusion about the purpose of the meeting. When the matter was raised at the May executive committee meeting there was some considerable opposition to it. This opposition took

several different forms. Several members felt that the meeting was outside the scope of the local association especially as such a meeting had never taken place with the Labour group while they had been in office. Fear was expressed that, just as it had been unwise to remain in the CEA and the Trades Council, so it was equally unwise to associate with a right wing political group. Such a proposal, it was argued, was not in keeping with the image which the local association wanted to project itself of a non-party political, non-radical, and essentially pragmatic organization which existed only to serve the needs of its members. During the debate a number of the officers, including the president, expressed the view that the meeting should not take place at all. Both the treasurer and the secretary argued that the purpose of the meeting was to educate the incoming Conservative group and that it would eventually help the officers to represent their members more effectively.

During a detailed consideration of those matters which the officers hoped to raise with the politicians, it was argued by the secretary that the NAS/UWT officers were attempting to initiate action on several areas in the hope that changes in LEA policy might be achieved. These issues included the balance of NAS/UWT representation on committees, the teacher-pupil ratio, the capitation allowances and the college-polytechnic merger. The secretary stressed that the meeting was nothing more than a public relations exercise and an attempt to initiate action and that it implied no political support. The ordinary members of the executive were not easily convinced. Eventually, it was agreed that the secretary should write to the Conservative group stressing the non-political nature of the proposed meeting and including an outline of NAS/UWT policy on a wide range of issues but emphasizing

local priorities. After the meeting a verbal report was given to the executive and a written report appeared in the local bulletin (NAS/UWT, 19771). The officers and members agreed, after the meeting, that it had proved to be a useful exercise. The NAS/UWT had not only initiated action, which was not often possible, but it also appeared that some issues, especially the one of representation of the NAS/UWT might receive some favourable consideration in the 1977-78 educational year. The debate about this meeting also reveals the extent to which the executive members shared a common perception about the nature of the local association, the image which it should present in its external relationships with other organizations and, to a lesser degree, the appropriateness or otherwise of particular forms of activity.

The NUPE Day of Action

There were external issues over which more serious disagreements took place about priorities and justifications in union activity. Perhaps the most significant of these in the 1976-77 period was over the NUPE Day of Action on 1st December 1976. The first indication of what was to come was given to the NAS/UWT executive meeting on 4th November, (NAS/UWT,1976i), when it was announced by the secretary that caretakers would not be opening schools, there would be no school meals and that schools would not be heated on 1st December as part of the NUPE protest against public expenditure cuts. The LEA had, as yet, made no policy statement inspite of attempts by the NAS/UWT secretary to obtain guidance from LEA officers on the matter of impending school closures. A long discussion followed this announcement during which several key points emerged. The question of the association's position on the proposed cuts had been rehearsed earlier at the same meeting in connection with the association's response to the CEA public meeting.

A further long discussion followed which focused on how the association as a union ought to react. The NUT had already announced its sympathy with the NUPE action and had agreed not to cross picket lines. The secretary and the president, reminding members that they should not cross NUPE picket lines, argued that the NAS/UWT should adopt a stance similar to that of the NUT. Several executive members were convinced that the association should be seen to be taking a stand on the public expenditure cuts if only because the NUT was already doing so. It was agreed, after a further intervention by the secretary, that, for the moment, the Coventry NAS/UWT should limit itself to an expression of sympathy with the NUPE action.

The secretary suggested that the crucial issues here were not about the NUPE Day of Action itself, but were related to the LEA responses to that action, especially whether or not they decided to close the schools officially for the day. In the event this would, indeed, turn out to be the most significant issue but not, perhaps, in the way that the secretary had anticipated. He resisted pressure at this meeting to issue instructions to all members telling them what to do in the face of the NUPE action, on the grounds that any such instructions must depend on the policy adopted by the LEA. In spite of strong pressure from some executive members to react in a more positive way, the meeting decided that the secretary would issue a press statement to the effect that the NAS/UWT was sympathetic towards the NUPE action and that members would be instructed in due course by a circular drawn up by the officers of the association. As late as 25th November, when the General Meeting of the association was held, the officers were still unable to give any real guidance based on LEA policy,(NAS/UWT,1976k), but the treasurer argued at that meeting that

it was inappropriate to concede that caretakers should be able to lock out teachers when all headteachers had keys to their own schools. As it turned out, this desire to ensure that local association policy reflected the intentions of the LEA caused considerable confusion especially because the promised press statement was not reported to the local press.

The next executive meeting, on 7th December, was an extremely well attended meeting at which most of the business concerned the aftermath of the NUPE Day of Action and the statement made by NUPE that a further withdrawal of labour of a similar kind was to be organized in February. The secretary reported that the NAS/UWT rejected the view, taken rather belatedly, by the LEA, that the caretakers alone had the necessary authority to unlock the schools especially as in Wolverhampton, for example, the opposite decision was taken and agreed to by NUPE. In the event of another NUPE action this might become a crucial issue for NAS/UWT members. The secretary also told the executive members that the LEA believed that it had evidence to the effect that the local NUPE branch had been infiltrated by political extremists who were responsible for the difficult situation which arose on 1st December.

Not even this revaluation was going to mollify some NAS/UWT members or lead them to moderate their criticism of the NAS/UWT officers for their handling of the events on that day, or to view with any more sympathy the situation with which the LEA found that it had to cope. It was a combination of an apparent lack of action by officers of the local association and a directive issued by the LEA which angered members. The Coventry NUPE, perhaps deliberately, had left the

decision as to whether or not to allow teachers into their schools until the last possible moment. As a result the letter to NAS/UWT members was very slow in arriving in schools since it was to comment on LEA reaction to NUPE's stance. Members were, therefore, left with almost no time before the Day of Action to consult their local association officers. Some of them only received instructions through a letter sent by the LEA to headteachers. It was the content of this letter which caused the trouble.

The letter instructed teachers not to go into schools on 1st December but directed them to assemble in some suitable place for a day devoted to in-service training. Some schools received this letter less than 24 hours before the Day of Action was due to begin. The letter to members from the NAS/UWT instructed members that the LEA had a right to issue such a directive and that they should make every effort to comply with it. At the December executive meeting the local officers defended the line taken in both letters on the ground that both they and the LEA were placed in a difficult situation by the lateness of the NUPE decision. They reinforced their view that the authority acted quite properly in giving the instructions that they did. To instruct members to do anything other than comply with the directive would have damaged the public image of the association at a time when teachers generally were having a bad press and would also have caused unnecessary damage to relations between the association and the LEA.

Many members of the executive expressed their disapproval and the disapproval of those they represented over the actions of the LEA and of the support given to those actions by the NAS/UWT officers. Several letters were read out to the meeting criticising the action or, as many saw it, the inaction of the Coventry NAS/UWT officers.

One letter containing 22 signatures complained bitterly about the failure of the local association to keep its members informed of developments and took a highly critical view of the stance taken by the officers while, at the same time, wanting to know the source of the original LEA letter and what, if any, consultation had taken place prior to its publication. The local secretary rejected the validity of the criticisms contained in that particular letter because none of the signatories had attended the general meeting to put their views to the officer, not an entirely valid point given the sequence of events. He agreed to visit the school to discuss the grievances with the workplace group and told the executive meeting that the offending letter had been drawn up by an assistant education officer after a meeting of the LEA's Education Planning Committee at which no teachers were present. There had, therefore, been no consultation.

School representatives on the executive made it quite clear that many rank-and-file NAS/UWT members had expected the LEA either to allow them to enter their schools or else to give them the day off. The directive to organize in-service training, therefore, came as a surprise to those members who saw it as an insult to their professional integrity and a sign that the local authority had little respect for its teachers. The local secretary argued that the LEA attitude towards its teachers, in this instance, was less important than the attempted manipulation of them by NUPE who saw that a NUPE Day of Action would have far more impact if schools were closed. He also suggested that NUPE recognized and, perhaps, exploited the danger of a local inter-union dispute that had arisen. In spite of this and in the face of the secretary's objections, the executive passed a motion to the effect that,

> Executive deplores the discriminatory and unprofessional treatment by the Coventry Education Authority at the time of the NUPE strike action of December 1st,1976. Their former goodwill towards their employers has suffered as a result (NAS/UWT,1976j;I).

This motion, proposed by representatives of a large workplace group from another comprehensive school on behalf of their members in that school. An amendment from the same source stating that,

> In the event of any future action by other unions which may result in the exclusion of children from school, staff should be allowed into their places of work (NAS/UWT,1976j;2),

was defeated thus leaving the secretary with some room for manoeuvre if the threatened NUPE action in February actually did take place. The passing of this motion was followed immediately by a unanimous vote of confidence in the secretary of the local association (NAS/UWT, 1976j:2).

The matter appeared to have been resolved but there was still a danger of the same thing happening again in February. The January executive meeting was told that the CJC on the previous day had been unable to persuade the LEA to draw up a policy for the future (NAS/UWT,1977p). The president's report on the CJC revealed that nothing had been achieved except a review of events and a call for contingency planning for February. The discussion which followed was clearly influenced by a statement issued from headquarters in response to an approach from the Coventry secretary which said that teachers had a right of access to their places of work without having to risk inter-union conflict by crossing picket lines and that NUPE should be informed of this. In due course this was done and the

NAS/UWT position was rejected by the area organizer for NUPE in a letter to the February executive meeting, (NAS/UWT,1977r), in which it was argued that NUPE caretakers had the sole right to lock and unlock schools. This issue was finally referred by the local secretary to headquarters for resolution by national officers of the two unions.

At the insistence of executive members acting on behalf of members in their schools the NAS/UWT officers continued to try to obtain some agreement about LEA action in the event of a future NUPE strike. They drew up a statement to be sent to the LEA outlining the local association's position on this. The main points of this statement were that the LEA should trust the professional integrity of its teachers and allow them to work at home. If the LEA wished to use the time for professional training this should be organized well in advance by the LEA. If schools were open teachers should report for work as usual. In the event the proposed action in February did not take place but it was evident from subsequent CJC reports that the points made in the NAS/UWT statement had been taken by the LEA.

This issue, perhaps, more than any other, reveals the extent to which member participation and influence was possible in the Coventry NAS/UWT since the initial angry responses came from the rank-and-file members themselves who used a wide range of available methods to bring influence to bear on the officers of the association in order to make their collective displeasure felt. It also shows how, at times, workplace groups could act together to influence the executive, especially when the actions of the officers of that executive were not in accordance with what the rank-and-file regarded as appropriate in the circumstances. It is also an example of how justifications

and explanations were provided for sets of actions on the part of both NAS/UWT and LEA officers. These justifications, based on an appreciation of the difficult position in which the LEA was placed, on the need to avoid inter-union conflict, and on the necessity for individuals to behave responsibly in the circumstances, were rejected by the membership. The rank-and-file clearly showed that it had other concerns such as the extent to which the LEA had failed to treat its teachers in a way which they believed that a professional group should be treated. The NAS/UWT officers and some members of the executive had to modify their positions considerably in order to be seen to be representing the wishes of the rank-and-file and in order to retain the confidence of the membership in Coventry.

The Functions of the Executive Committee

From the above discussion it can be seen that much of the work on the executive of the Coventry NAS/UWT consists of responding to a variety of situations most of which are external to the local association. The actions of the LEA as well as information and directives issued from the NAS/UWT headquarters, the positions taken by other unions and interested groups on educational matters, and for the secretary, casework which emanates from schools, all form part of the environment within which the Coventry NAS/UWT has to function and to which it has to respond. In order to make these responses effectively, the officers of the association have to establish and maintain a range of contacts, especially with the LEA. Considerable time and effort on the part of the NAS/UWT officers goes in to developing mutual confidence between themselves and officers of the LEA. This can, and does, lead to strains being placed on internal relationships between some NAS/UWT

officers and members. In spite of this, the members appear both to retain confidence in their officers and to be able to influence them over important issues. If, as Sayles and Strauss, (1976:vii), argue, the main point of contact between the member and the union is the branch, then, in this case, the branch as represented by the executive and its officers has a predominantly external focus. It cannot be claimed that the attempt to develop an essential shop steward function for school representatives has created a situation where workplace based representatives can deal with negotiations which might, in the past, have been the concern of the local branch (Clegg,1970). Nor can it be argued that this local association or its executive has been subjected to a loss of authority due to the processes of centralization which have removed significant union business from the local to the regional or national level (Webb,1924).

There was only one real indication that important union business was located elsewhere. This same factor also illustrated the existence but, in this case, the relative unimportance for local level activity, of a tight, nationally negotiated agreement on wages and salaries that Boraston, Clegg and Rimmer, (1975), suggest might be relevant for determining the nature of local union activities in some situations. The Coventry NAS/UWT executive spent very little time at its meetings discussing matters related to salaries which were, for all teachers, negotiated nationally by the Burnham Committee on which the NAS/UWT has a minority representation. Local salary queries tended to be of an individual nature concerning the location of a particular teacher on one of the salary scales, or the extent to which allowances were being given for specific qualifications. As such these queries were handled confidentially by the secretary as casework except where

general issues might emerge, such as when Warwickshire gave its teachers extra pay for a first aid qualification and Coventry did not (NAS/UWT,1977i). Salaries were only discussed on three occasions in the 1976-77 period, always under 'Any Other Business' item on the agenda (NAS/UWT,1976g; 1977i; 1977m). Each time the issue was the same. This was the extent to which flat rate wage agreements favoured by the TUC were eroding teachers' salaries. Several executive members expressed the view that the National Association ought to be more active in safeguarding their positions, and it was agreed that the secretary should write to headquarters asking for clarification on the NAS/UWT's pay policy and outlining the views of the Coventry local association.

In this, as is so many other matters, the function of the executive and its officers was to represent the view of the local members wherever it was appropriate that this should be done. In order to do this the local association had to provide such opportunities for participation and representation as to enable the officers to be made aware of what the concerns of the members happened, at that time, to be. The formal structuring of the association, especially the enlarging of the executive and the steps taken the ensure that various groups were represented was one major factor in the participative process. The informal approaches made by individual members to the secretary which formed the basis of his casework, as the next chapter will show, was another significant aspect in the structuring of participation and representation in the Coventry NAS/UWT.

On the executive itself the internal committees and the part played by officers of the local association on external committees, both had a part to play in ensuring that members' views were represented by their local association.

The external committees on which the NAS/UWT officers served as officers of the association or, in the case of the secretary, as a members in his own right had both a direct and indirect part to play in the representative processes within the NAS/UWT. They provided a series of regular opportunities for the officers of the association to become known within the LEA and the education community generally. They also allowed the officers to establish their own credibility, and to have access to a wide range of background information and to relevant officers of the authority so that NAS/UWT officers could approach those officers of the LEA who were actually dealing with a certain matter rather than go first to one whose responsibility it was on paper, but on paper only. Members of the Coventry NAS/UWT were thus represented by officers who were better informed in a number of ways than might otherwise have been the case.

The internal committees had the functions of providing information for officers, enabling officers to be prepared in advance for certain events, coping with more detailed aspects of particular situations such as the record cards issue and at the same time, giving opportunities for wider participation in the activities of the local association, especially for newer members of the executive. Apart from giving these members valuable experience of trade union activity, the sub-committee system was starting to provide a valuable information processing and digesting service to both officers and members. The existence of this system also meant that these information processes and distribution functions were firmly located within the executive committee rather than distributed throughout the local association as a whole. The sub-committees were more easily controllable by the officer groups, because they reported back to the executive rather than to the general meeting, which was an alternative available to the

local association. Organizationally this was, perhaps, a sound place to locate the sub-committees but placing them elsewhere might have had the effect of re-invigorating the general meeting rather than the executive meeting.

The executive itself, like its sub-committees, has its part to play in processing and disseminating information. Most schools are represented on the executive, therefore, information coming to these meetings should, fairly quickly, find its was into schools through their executive representatives and through the bulletins. As Chapter 4 showed, however, school representatives did not always see this as part of their duties. At times executive members had difficulty during meetings digesting the information which was being made available to them even where this was being used by officers as part of a process of generating awareness or of raising and defining issues.

Taken as a whole the executive meetings were part of a three fold process of raising and defining issues. Officers' meetings, although less important, were another part of this process and the secretary's casework a third. Many issues were simply a response generated by the NAS/UWT to situations outside the local association. The particular issue was, in such circumstances, frequently shaped and defined elsewhere. The choices available to the NAS/UWT were either how to respond or whether or not to respond. Frequently responses were necessary if the interests of all or part of the membership were to be protected. Executive meetings were, in such cases, in a position of having to consider action after it had been taken or, at the very best, required to comment on a rather restricted set of choices of action. The May Day holiday problem, originally

concerned with the extent to which the LEA had used the appropriate consultative machinery, actually gave the executive very little scope for action. The issue was fairly rapidly re-defined by headquarters, since it involved the more fundamental problem of the nature of the teachers' contracts with the LEA, an issue on which all teachers' unions have taken a similar stance opposing the drawing up of a formal contract of employment.

Similarly officers of the local association raised issues, at times, on the basis of information which was not available to members. The membership of the Trades Council and the CEA, for example, were raised entirely by officers but in terms which members found appropriate and acceptable. They thus supported the lines of action being proposed by their officers. Sometimes, however, officer's definitions and, indeed, executive member's definitions were rejected by the rank-and-file. The officers found some considerable difficulty obtaining agreement for their proposed meeting with the Conservative group on the council. The officers and executive members experienced more difficulty in having their definition of the situation accepted by the members over the NUPE strike.

Initially the executive identified two important elements in that situation. Firstly the issue of who should unlock schools and, secondly, the related issue of the possibility of a local inter-union conflict over the crossing of picket lines. This was against a background of an attempt to be accommodating towards the LEA by trying to instruct NAS/UWT members to act in accordance with legitimate LEA instructions. The Coventry rank-and-file, acting through their executive representatives and through direct communication with the relevant officers, showed that they were far more concerned with issues related to how a local authority should act towards its teachers and what treatment, as

professionals, they had a right to expect in such a situation. Pressure brought to bear on officers through the executive eventually led to negotiations with the LEA over this in an attempt to meet such an eventuality more readily in the future.

The executive can thus be seen to have both a direct and an indirect part to play in raising and defining issues. That is, it provides a forum for issues to be raised by officers and executive members and it also provides a mechanism through which issues can either be raised or re-defined as part of a process involving either headquarters or the rank-and-file in Coventry. The process of raising, defining and acting tends to follow those lines which have been suggested by the officers although, even here, discussions on the executive serve to create a climate in which officers can feel reasonably confident that they have the support of the members through the establishing of shared perceptions which forms part of those discussions. Machinery does exist for challenging what is said and done on the executive. This is rarely used, perhaps because the activities of the officers and executive members are informed by a fairly well defined set of shared perceptions about what the executive should do in various situations. It may also indicate the success enjoyed by officers in controlling access to information, although this is a less likely interpretation given the extent to which most information is freely available on the executive. There is, if anything, too much of it rather than too little of it.

The executive meeting, therefore, serves as an arena in which actions taken in the name of the members can be legitimated and challenged by them or for them. It is part of a continual process

of influencing and controlling what goes on between official representatives of the association and those they represent. This process is based on a shared understanding that the main function of the union is to protect the interests of its members. This, in turn, depends on an agreement about where those interests are to be located. The executive is continually exploring and re-defining this in the light of a changing environment. For this reason alone the external relationships, which enable that to be done, are important to the local association. This re-definition of interests is done within a framework derived from the general ethos of the NAS/UWT itself which has a specific view about what the interests of its members are and what activities are appropriate for the protection of those interests. This framework, considered in the second and third chapters, provides a point of reference for all those involved in the local association. It also gives some indication as to the nature of trade union activity as perceived by the officers and members of the Coventry NAS/UWT for this, too, informs the legitimation, controlling and influencing processes which are such a significant part of the activities of the executive meetings.

The Nature of Trade Union Activity

It has been argued that the content and the conduct of the executive committee meetings of the Coventry NAS/UWT indicate that there exists an influential set of shared perceptions within the local association which is, in part, derived from the national ethos of the union and, in part, from continual re-definitions in the light of local circumstances. Much of the discussion on the local executive committee is an exploration of those local circumstances and an application of them to shared

perceptions in an attempt to ensure that the actions of the executive and its officers did reflect the interests of the Coventry rank-and-file. This activity owed much to the language in which it was carried out and the assumptions which may be identified as underpinning that language and the related discourse between officers, executive members and the rank-and-file. These assumptions and this language will be examined in some detail in Chapter 9. The content of this discourse, itself, indicates something about the nature of trade union activity.

The discussion in the executive committee was rarely about the formulation of policy although the discourse was frequently about the ways in which general policy may be translated into specific actions. In so far as it had a general policy, this was concerned with the protection of members' interests and ensuring that members views were represented wherever this needed doing. Such general policy as there was about specific issues was derived from national NAS/UWT policy although the local association was not above rejecting or, at least questioning, that policy in the light of local circumstances as with the directives from headquarters on recruitment. In this sense, then, the trade union activity as pursued by this local association contained a strong pragmatic element. The Coventry NAS/UWT did what it thought it could and should do in local circumstances.

It could not be argued that the discourse on the executive was, with any degree of frequency, about formulating plans for action in the future. More often the executive meeting found itself in a position of either having to accept or reject a specific course of action. It also found itself being required to give its approval to decisions already taken by officers or for actions already carried

out in its name. This it tended to do on most occasions with very little real conflict between officers, members, or rank-and-file. It has already been argued that, in part, this is due to the existence of shared perceptions which inform the decisions taken and the actions carried out on behalf of the executive and members. The content and conduct of the executive meetings and the re-action of members and rank-and file to those meetings may also be determined by a shared understanding about the nature of trade union activity iteself.

It is clear from this description of the Coventry NAS/UWT executive meetings that its activities fall into two distinct categories, reactive and proactive. Proactive activity takes place where the local association, usually through one of its officers, defines an issue, initiates action and follows it through. The arrangements concerning the meeting with the incoming Conservative group of councillors, even in the face of opposition from some executive members, was such a proactive stance. This meeting was arranged with the intention of putting NAS/UWT concerns over local issues to the new ruling group and to determine how they might react over a range of educational issues. If the aim was to establish and to develop mutual understanding then the long term purpose of this proactive stance, was clearly, to make reactive responses easier by knowing the incoming group of councillors and by being known to them.

The NAS/UWT's stance towards the blue asbestos issue was, initially pro-active. The action was started by a school representative who was also an NAS/UWT executive member. The LEA responded by having the school inspected but then failed to fulfil its promise to send a copy of the inspector's report to the school and the union. The

NAS/UWT was forced to respond to this by approaching the LEA without success although verbal assurances were given and the local association had, through its Conditions of Service Sub-Committee, to seek further information before proceeding further since little was known locally about the possible dangers of blue asbestos. Thus a pro-active stance changed, through force of circumstances, to a situation in which it had to react the LEA activity or, in the case, inactivity. This illustrates the difficulties of much union business. Even where a local association attempts to initiate action it is often forced into a *re*active stance by the actions of the employers. Even when it initiates actions in its entirety, such as the meeting with the councillors, the need to be able to react is never far from the surface in union activity.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, to find that most of the business of the Coventry NAS/UWT executive is essentially *re*active. In some instances, such as recruitment,.it took some time for an initial response to emerge from the executive because it was trying to evaluate a directive from national headquarters in the light of local circumstances. In this case the local association did not comply with the directive in its entirety. It was far more difficult for the executive to time its responses where it was dealing with issues arising as a result of the actions of other unions or where it depended on the reactions of the LEA to the actions of other unions, as in the NUPE Day of Action situation. Reacting to this situation proved to be extremely difficult for the local officers and resulted in some detailed and forceful criticism of them by the rank-and-file for their inability to provide adequate guidance in sufficient time.

The need for the executive to react to a situation is not usually as pressing as this. Nevertheless most of the activity of the local executive was of a similarly reactive nature and it normally had to accord to a time scale with which the NAS/UWT executive may have little or no influence. This was the case, for example, with the work of the CJC and the degree to which it was consultative or representative. Here the NAS/UWT was responding to an LEA initiative which, almost certainly, had the support of the larger union on the CJC. The time scale depended on the course of CJC meetings and, where relevant, meetings about the college-polytechnic merger. The extent to which NAS/UWT representatives can control issues, therefore, depends on the issues. On the whole, the officers of the Coventry NAS/UWT can only predict and be prepared to react to issues initiated elsewhere to a limited extent. Their role is essentially a short term reactive one. This requires that they respond to the actions of the LEA and to those of other unions connected with the education service. Because they represent a small relatively weak union, they are even less likely to be able to initiate action than are officers of larger unions.

The Coventry executive members and officers were aware of these characteristics of trade union activity and the difficulties inherent in them. The establishing of the sub-committee system was an attempt by the executive to be ready to respond, and also try to shift the emphasis of its activity from reactive to proactive in line with the wishes of the local association's president. This attempted shift was doomed to failure because it was contrary to the very nature of trade union activity. Even the sub-committee reports and the ways in which the sub-committee system was used by the officers reflect the reactive nature of most trade union activity.

The expertise which was being developed, while useful in enabling officers to react more quickly and effectively, is unlikely to produce a significant shift from reactive to proactive modes of operating. In any case this may not be what the members of the NAS/UWT require of their local executive.

Perhaps the most important service which the officers of the executive can provide for their members is to protect and represent their interests by being able to react in an appropriate way in circumstances which it, and they, cannot control in an attempt to defend members from unilateral action by employers or from any other part of their environment. Perhaps the recognition of this, implicitly or explicitly, informs the approach of executive members to their officers and the rank-and-file to the executive. The need to leave its officers scope and flexibility to react to situations may be a vital factor in the unwillingness of the local executive and, through it, the rank-and-file, to attempt to circumscribe the actions of officers too closely and to provide the degree of support and legitimation that was provided through the executive meetings. This understanding of the nature of trade union activity, together with the existence of a set of shared perceptions about members' interests and how they might best be protected, help to determine the patterns of control and influence, participation and representation within the Coventry NAS/UWT.

Conclusion

The structure of the Coventry NAS/UWT, especially the size and make up of the local executive, is crucial to the processes of participation and representation. The structure also determines the extent to which those processes actually do enable members to feel that their interests are being taken into account in the conduct of the local association's business. The same structure is also of central

importance in shaping and facilitating the complex patterns of control and influence which operate within the local association. These patterns enable members to attempt to control the actions of officers and, in their turn, officers try to influence the behaviour of members. This interaction takes place through a wide range of activities such as the election and training of school representatives, but the main focus of it is the local executive meeting.

This analysis of the activities of the local executive as revealed through its meetings shows that both participation in union affairs and the exercising of control or influence is more complex than has previously been suggested. Participation is more than voting in elections, (Lipset,1962), or attending branch or any other kind of meeting, (Goldstein,1952). Meetings such as the Coventry NAS/UWT executive meetings do make judgements about the ordering of priorities, about the processing of information and about the ways in participation may be structured within the framework of the particular meeting. The rank-and-file member does not necessarily have to participate in the detail of such activities in order to have his views represented. The structuring of participation simply needs to be such that these views can be put, and put forcefully, when a specific issue demands that this should be done.

To enable such influence to take place, active factions, (Martin,1968), or close elections for leadership positions,(Edelstein, 1967), are not necessary. Even when attempting to change the course of events or to criticise the actions of officers, some of the large workplace groups failed to attend meetings, although this did not help to strengthen their case. Nevertheless their views and those of many

other members of the rank-and-file were acted upon by the officers and the executive. The criticism was immediately followed by expressions of confidence in the leadership and the presentation of a united front by the executive. Influence, in this case did not require a monolithic electoral structure, but it did a participative structure which allowed two things to happen. Firstly,officers had to appreciate the importance of providing justifications for their actions to their members. Secondly, officers had to be able to appreciate when those justifications were not accepted by members who believed that particular actions were not in their own interests.

Where officers and members agree that the representation of members' interests is the main function of union activity and where a relatively clear set of definitions about what those interests are and how they should be furthered is shared between them, the kind of rigid electoral control over officers by members, envisaged in the Green Paper, (Department of Employment,1983), is unnecessary. Equally the concern of the officials of the Union of Post Office Workers, to be able to control the actions of their members, as identified by Moran, (1974), is also absent from the affairs of the Coventry NAS/UWT, except where officers attempt to prevent the inexperienced or unwary school representative from exceeding his authority.

These interests are defined and re-defined within the executive and as part of the interaction between the Coventry NAS/UWT and its wider environment. Much of the work of the executive committee is externally focused. This is even true of the internal sub-committee structure which, apart from providing valuable experience for a number of executive members, tended, at this time, to consist mainly of helping officers and members to react to situations as they arose in the wider environment and which, by their very nature, were not controllable or able to be predicted by the local association. The

work of the executive committee and its officers was, therefore, circumscribed by external events, the timing and pace of which was determined by factors and groups not associated with the NAS/UWT itself.

As a result much trade union activity is reactive rather than proactive in nature. The reactive stances, since issues cannot be predicted or prepared for, have to be based on shared perceptions and common concerns. The officers are, for example, concerned to maintain good relationships with officers of the LEA and to establish effective communications with them. These relationships were based on a specific image which the NAS/UWT wished to project of itself as a moderate and accommodating organization which was not politically motivated, and which appreciated many of the difficulties faced by the LEA. At the same time the local association wanted, as far as possible, to avoid inter-union conflict although this seemed to be more an acknowledgement of its own weakness than a general concern for the general principles of inter-union solidarity. These concerns helped to shape the behaviour of officers and the expectations of members. Together with an appreciation of the essentially reactive nature of much union activity on the part of the members of the local association, the existence of these concerns within the Coventry NAS/UWT created a situation in which rigid patterns of control by members over officers or by officers over members was unnecessary. This was because there existed a fairly extensive agreement over what behaviour was appropriate and what was not, and over how particular action would need to be justified in order to receive legitimation from executive members and the rank-and-file.

These concerns and the related awareness about what was appropriate and what was not can be seen most clearly in the role played by the secretary within the local association. The secretary was the central figure in the work of the executive. He provided most of the necessary information and initiated most of the required responses. Most of the business of the executive meetings and the officer' meetings and most of the activities of the school representatives involved him. His was the most externally focused role of all. He was the person through whom outside organizations, including the LEA, approached the NAS/UWT, and he was also the person through whom the NAS/UWT approached outside organizations.

Much of his work was confidential casework which was hardly ever reported to the executive. When it was reported this was only done in the most general of terms and, even to the officer group, only the barest outline of a case were ever given. Much of the activity of this key officer, therefore, was either not subjected to scrutiny by the rest of the association or was reported to meetings after the event. Confidence in him and his work was, however, generally high. His activities within the Coventry NAS/UWT, therefore, require a detailed analysis.

CHAPTER SEVEN

LOCAL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATION

THE SECRETARY

Introduction

The executive committee of the Coventry NAS/UWT is the main arena within which the business of the local association is discussed, explained and, more often than not, legitimated. It is not the central focus of policy-making since much of the association's reaction to situations is based on a pragmatic approach which is, at best, informed by a general but shared perception about members' interests and how these interests might be pursued. Much of the business of the local association is carried out by the officer group, most significant of whom is the secretary. He is, in a real sense, the executive officer in that those actions carried out in the name of the local association are carried out by him. This may be done, as the previous chapter indicated, at the request of the executive committee, on his own initiative after discussion on the executive committee, or on his own initiative without discussion on the executive committee.

In many ways the secretary had an ambiguous role. He was not a shop steward because he did not directly represent his members at their workplace. The school representatives do that but their role, it has been argued, is a confused and limited one. Their scope for independent action is extremely restricted. There are discrepancies in the expectations that they, their workplace members, and the workplace representation policy of the NAS/UWT at national level have of the school representatives. As a direct result of this, the secretary often had to take on workplace based issues as if he were a shop steward. This involved him in dealing with individual headteachers as well as officers of the LEA.

The secretary was not a full-time paid official of the association, yet he carried out many of those functions which have normally been regarded as the prerogative of a full-time official including consistent, direct attempts to influence workplace representation. He was able to do this because he used his own workplace as a point of contact for his members and anyone else who wanted to contact him. He was the Head of the 6th Form at a local comprehensive school and had been secretary for six years at the time of this study, before which he was an active member for a considerable period. Although he held a post of some considerable responsibility in his school he was given a lighter than usual timetable, and also had the benefit of four extra free periods each week as well as cover for the time he needed to devote to his union activities outside school as part of an agreement with the LEA. The school secretarial staff took messages for him and, at times, acted as gatekeepers by not putting through calls from the few people to whom the secretary did not wish to speak. The demands on his time were such that, without this kind of help and without a very light timetable, he would have been unable to carry out his duties as secretary effectively or to attend to the many other aspects of his educational work.

The secretary, as a result of his work, had become a member of a series of education committees both as a representative of the NAS/UWT and in his own right. He used the information and contacts made by this committee membership to pursue his secretarial duties although, as will be shown below, some of the other officers regarded his extensive committee membership as an inhibiting factor in the performance of these duties while others saw this membership as a positive advantage. The secretary himself believed that,

'If you want to be a branch secretary you have to do more than the job itself if you want to be able to influence events' (NAS/UWT,1976c). This attitude influenced his approach to his secretarial duties and, in so doing, created a situation in which he was fulfilling the third role identified by Boraston,(1975:159), that of taking over the role of a full time officer of the union. Such officers did not exist in the NAS/UWT but this secretary interpreted his role in such a way as to fill any gap which might otherwise have been left in the union organization by the absence of a full time officer.

He was the person who dealt with the employers, another of Boraston's significant indicators in determining roles within trade union organization (Boraston et.al., 1975:153). His relatively heavy casework load highlights the extent to which this was the case since all of this brought him into contact with the LEA and much of it involved headteachers as well. This casework often required the secretary to have the skills of a social worker rather than of a trade union official, since much of the casework was related to the personal as well as the professional problems of members. The casework also reinforced the external focus of the secretary's role and the extent to which he, like his association, was frequently placed in the position of having to respond to events rather than being able to control them.

This requirement to be able to react to circumstances, together with the range of different duties with which the secretary was expected to cope, meant that he had to approach his activities in a number of different ways. The approach which he adopted in any given circumstance depended on factors such as the nature of the situation as he perceived it, his perception of his members' interests and a pragmatic notion of what was possible in the particular situation as well as his assumptions about the likely reactions of the LEA and/or headquarters. All of this would be placed within an overall

context of the need, as far as possible, to obtain and retain the support of his officers and executive and, at the same time, to remain within the generally moderate stance towards trade union activities which the secretary, in common with the Coventry NAS/UWT as a whole, tried to develop and retain. In the following this line the secretary continually attempted to play down the clash of interests between his members and the employers and, in so doing, he would fall into the category of trade union members defined by Fosh,(1981:75), as 'inactives'. Similarly he would not easily fit into Batsone's 'leader-type' union representatives, which included the most respected and experienced shop steward. They, however, had a conflict image of the relationship between unions and employers (Batsone et.al.,1977:26). In spite of this he has obtained and retained the confidence of his executive membership and of the rank-and-file. His actions were normally legitimated by the executive committee and his justifications for those actions were normally accepted.

The secretary of the NAS/UWT in Coventry was active in three separate but related spheres, the executive committee and its sub-committees, committees external to the local association, and casework. His methods were informed by shared perceptions and the need to have much of his activity expalined to his members through the executive committee, and constrained by available resources and by the nature of the trade union activity itself. This chapter will examine each of these spheres of activity in turn before it considers the methods adopted by the secretary. It will then examine the constraints to which this central figure in the local executive is subjected, the part he plays in the representation processes within the local

association and his role in the complex patterns of control and influence which operate in the local association.

The Secretary and the Executive

The secretary of this NAS/UWT local association, as in any other such local association, had a considerable amount of general administration to do in order to enable other officers and executive members to function efficiently although in Coventry the secretary did have assistants. Nevertheless this aspect of his work occupied a significant part of the secretary's time and was one area which the president wanted to be delegated to other officers. The secretary was also responsible for supervizing the various sub-committees of the NAS/UWT executive in Coventry. This work will increase as the sub-committee structure extends although there would then be scope for delegation. The secretary also controlled the benevolent fund which has the discretion to make gifts but not loans to members, retired members and their dependents. This work, unlike some of the secretary's other activities, tended to be done in consultation with other officers, especially the treasurer.

The secretary, the centre of a small group of officers, was also central to the affairs of the executive committee. It was always to the secretary that information came from headquarters. He was responsible for passing it on to other officers and members. The same was true of information from most other sources. Thus most of the executive, with the possible exception of the treasurer, tended to be dependent on the secretary for information and other resources with which to carry out their responsibilities. The secretary was also significant in distributing responsibilities since, along with the treasurer and president, he played a major part in controlling

the business which went to the sub-committee. This again was based on his control, interpretation and distribution of information. Normally NAS/UWT secretaries were the most permanent members of their association and the ones most able to develop relevant contacts which enable them to play a yet more significant part in the affairs of the local association. This was true of the secretary of the Coventry NAS/UWT who had developed such a set of contacts.

The existence of these contacts was, perhaps, least evident in the part the secretary played in executive meetings. Here, although he played a major part in all proceedings, he was particularly in evidence in the 'Correspondence' item of the agenda. He used this item as a clearing house for information by bringing almost all the correspondence which he received to the attention of the executive. He then either received suggestions for appropriate action from the executive or made such recommendations himself (see Appendix D, Table 4). Some items were only included to inform members, such as those relating to the college-polytechnic merger, about which members could do little or nothing about which they felt genuine concern. Other items were included to forewarn executive members about material which was to be included in the local bulletin at a later date. This enabled school representatives to bring such items to the attention of their workplace groups at the appropriate time. Many of these items were passed round the meeting while it was in progress, not always to everyone's satisfaction as was noted in the previous chapter.

Some meetings would have reported to them the whole of the Green Bulletin, a monthly circular from headquarters . This was to inform secretaries about important matters including issues which had

developed from cases in different parts of the country. Some of these were followed up locally by the secretary. An item on police involvement in schools was one such case, as a result of which the Coventry local association held discussions with the LEA and representatives of the local police, a pro-active measure designed to avoid trouble in the future. Normally, however, the Green Bulletin was circulated during the meeting. This document, in particular, containing as it did, so much important information, would have benefited from some form of indexing at local level. The same was true of other items which came from headquarters. These tended to fall broadly into two categories, recruitment or conditions of service and, therefore, tended to be sent to the relevant local executive sub-committee for attention. Sometimes these items from headquarters requested information from the local association. These were dealt with by the secretary.

Most other items of correspondence were dealt with in similar ways. Much of it was noted, circulated during the meeting and then filed by the secretary. Some of it found its way into the local bulletin or on to the agenda of the relevant sub-committees. Occasionally an item required further action or became a major issue. For example, requests from bodies such as examination boards came to the secretary as correpondence (NAS/UWT,1977k; 1977m). In such cases nominations would normally be called for immediately, if they were not proposed by the secretary as part of his correspondence item. Sometimes such matters of representation led to a discussion about steps which need to be taken in order that perceived NAS/UWT under-representation might be remedied (NAS/UWT,1977m). On the whole, however, this item was used by the secretary to inform and alert executive members.

His use of 'Reports' was very similar, although here he was much less dominant in the proceedings especially as the other officers and members grew in confidence over the year. He often used 'Reports' and other parts of the agenda to indicate the growing importance of a particular situation or to try to ensure that work, once delegated, was carried out. The training course for school representatives was handled in such a way. Some items were put on the agenda in order to draw attention to cases locally or elsewhere. This was rare but did happen in the case of police action in schools, (NAS/UWT,1976j). More often, the case under consideration was a local one. Such a case usually highlighted a matter of national policy like that in March,1977, (NAS/UWT,1977i), which concerned the reluctance of the LEA to prosecute parents who assault teachers. The secretary used this item to report that the national association could, and would, bring a prosecution in the case. This was, he pointed out, in line with the association's policy of defending the interests of its members without inhibition (Kogan, 1975:121).

The centrality of the secretary on the executive committee was based, therefore, on access to, and control of, information although, as was shown in the previous chapter, distribution was not limited or restricted. His position was also based on the extent to which he carried out the actions of the executive on his own or in concert with other officers. This part of his role was determined by the national regulations governing the activities of local assoxiations,(NAS/UWT, 1977a), which stated that the secretary had to be involved in issues at an early stage and that he should be the link between the local association and other levels of the union organization. In Coventry

this part of the secretary's role was strengthened, however, by his wide experience within the educational service in the City which, in turn, came from his extensive membership of committees, as secretary of the Coventry NAS/UWT, as a person elected by teachers within the City or as a co-opted member. This committee membership intensified the existing external focus on his activities and added to the resources at his disposal in carrying out those duties.

The Secretary and External Committees

The secretary's duties on the executive, although they tended to be externally focused, did represent the internal aspect of his work in that those duties were conducted within the framework of the Coventry NAS/UWT organization. Nevertheless those duties provided a significant indication of just how externally focused much of the work that the secretary did actually was. He acted as the public relations and press officer of the NAS/UWT, unlike the situation which prevails in the NUT where the press officer is a member of the executive committee (NUT,1983). The secretary could thus be thought to represent the Coventry NAS/UWT whether or not he was officially representing the local association.

He represented the NAS/UWT on such bodies as the Coventry Teachers' Centre Management Committee, the NAS/UWT Midland Federation and, until late in 1976, the Campaign for Educational Advancement. Some of this representation, like the Coventry Trades Council, he delegated to other officers. The secretary was also involved in the work of several other committees such as the College of Education Board of Governors and its Committee for Education, the Coventry Education Authority Further Education and Full Committees as well as the CJC. On these committees

he was either elected or co-opted as a teacher representative rather than as a union representative. This was not part of his secretarial work although, to the extent that a person who becomes well known in one field may be invited to take part in related activities, the two types of activity cannot be easily separated.

It has already been shown, in Chapter 5, that at least two officers had different views about the secretary's wide range of committee representation. The secretary himself argued that undertaking so many duties was necessary for him to become an efficient secretary. He needed to get to know officers of the LEA and, perhaps more important, he needed to be known to them (NAS/UWT,1977g). He argued that when LEA officers can identify the main representative of any particular group and when that representative is seen to be operating in a number of different but related spheres, then it increases the credibility of both the group and its representatives. This certainly appeared to be the case with this secretary and his local association. Whether or not the secretary was always representing his members on the various committees, he saw his membership of those committees as making an important contribution to his ability to represent his NAS/UWT members in Coventry.

Apart from being highly visible through his membership of these committees and also being provided with the opportunity to establish a wide range of educational contacts through his membership, this committee membership aslo enabled him to be far better informed than he might otherwise have been. This was so in terms of actual information and, of equal importance, the location of information and the distribution of responsibilities within the LEA. In all these respects the secretary regarded his membership of the Education Committee as particularly vital

(NAS/UWT,1977e). It was from the business of this committee that the secretary was often able to identify which officers fulfilled a specific function within the LEA and, therefore, who to approach on particular matters of NAS/UWT business.

The secretary did recognize that this range of activity might cause his two main problems. There was a danger that being active on several committees could, at times, result in the imposing of limitations on the amount of time that he can devote to his duties as local NAS/UWT secretary. A by-product of such activities could be, however, that some of the work of the secretary, in particular casework, may be expedited more easily. More fundamentally, however, the approach adopted by the secretary to his secretarial duties might have been affected by his committee membership and especially that of the Education Committee. Membership of that committee meant that sometimes the secretary felt obliged to put the LEA view to members of his own executive as, for example, in the case of the NUPE action (NAS/UWT, 1976j). There was a danger that, in so doing, the secretary could have become estranged from his membership and lost their confidence.

He seemed able to avoid doing this for two reasons. In the final analysis the secretary saw his role as being to express the views of his members, (NAS/UWT,1977g), and this took priority over expressing any other views. At the same time adopting an accommodating stance towards the LEA and its concerns was part of the general strategy of union activity which shaped the actions of the Coventry NAS/UWT. The treasurer suggested that the danger of the secretary experiencing conflicting loyalties was frequently exaggerated (NAS/UWT,1977d). He argued that the secretary's role was extremely diverse and, that therefore, being a member of a variety of committee, whether or not this was in his capacity as secretary, was useful both for the local association and for the secretary himself (NAS/UWT,1976d).

Committee membership was one way in which the secretary kept himself informed but, more significantly, such membership enabled him to become known to significant figures in the Coventry education service. A good secretary in such a situation could readily earn the respect of such people and even rival unions agreed that the current NAS/UWT secretary was extremely competent (NUT,1983). This view was shared by the LEA (Coventry LEA,1983). The secretary, therefore, was able to negotiate with more success on union matters and to acquire considerable influence which, as the next section will show, he was able to exert in casework as well as in other spheres of union activity. He was, it can be argued, a more effective secretary of his local association than he might have been if he had not been a member of those committees.

In the opinion of the secretary, (NAS/UWT,1976d), shared by the treasurer, (NAS/UWT,1977d), the respect and influence acquired by performing successfully in the wider educational setting within Coventry may be used,in particular circumstances, to represent his members more effectively through his union activity. The NAS/UWT president, (NAS/UWT, 1977c), on the other hand, believed that such committee membership was more likely to be a handicap to the secretary who might, himself, be subject to influence and, therefore, be constrained during important negotiations on behalf of his members. He also wanted the secretary to delegate some committee membership in order to give other executive members more experience, more access to information and an opportunity to establish themselves outside the confines of the local NAS/UWT organization.

On the evidence of the secretary's participation in executive and officers' meetings and, as the next section will show, his handling

of casework, the membership of such a range of committees did give the secretary a wider view of issues than he might otherwise have had if his activities had been limited to business of a strictly union nature. Equally he was able to conduct union business in a way which might not have been possible without the stature, influence and the wide range of contacts which those activities generated. The importance of those contacts was that they enabled the local secretary to act more informally than he might otherwise have been able to do and, perhaps, with sufficient speed to prevent a simple case from becoming a major issue. His central function, representing his members, was kept central by the various processes of providing justifications for his actions to officers' and executive meetings rather than, for example, by continual reference to headquarters or to other local association secretaries elsewhere in the country.

There were, in fact, no regular meetings of local association secretaries at national or even regional level. Training and discussions had recently been introduced at Rednal, the NAS/UWT's conference centre and future headquarters. From these meetings the secretary gained the impression that he was less formal in his approach to his secretarial duties than many other secretaries. They appeared to be forced into formal channels of work by their relationships with officers of their LEAs and by an inability to establish contacts which would enable them to circumvent formal channels. These differences of approach may, in part, be explained by a general lack of training and briefing of secretaries but much must also have depended on local conditions and especially on wider committee membership. The Coventry local association secretary received no formal training although he did attend meetings of local secretaries. The secretarial conferences now held at Rednal, focused

on topics such as recruitment, casework, publicity and the organization of local branches in order to provide the rudiments of training for local secretaries (NAS/UWT,1976e).

The effect of such training was frequently to highlight the difference in emphasis between national or regional officers and the local secretaries. National executive members tended to see local issues in terms of national policy, while local officers tended to see the national-local relationship in the reverse order, evaluating national policy according to its anticipated effect on local issues. As a result local issues tended to be handled in terms of national policy rather than local conditions if national officers became involved. This led the local officers to avoid sending information about some cases to headquarters, a tactic that was, at times, adopted by the Coventry secretary. The Midland member of the national executive had to be involved in order to authorize various type of action, (NAS/UWT,1977a), so this could not always be avoided. The Coventry secretary's position within the education service in the City, especially his contacts developed through a wide committee membership, enabled him to adopt this approach more often than many other local secretaries. This was especially true of casework.

The Secretary and Casework

Casework is an essentially individual activity carried out by the secretary in response to individual grievances which, normally, are brought to him by a member or, less usually, a member's school representative. The issues raised by the casework, therefore, tended to be school based. They were generated by interaction between members and headteachers, pupils, parents or the LEA, although occasionally

officers of the LEA might alert the secretary to a situation in a particular school. Normally the cases were locally focused and remained so, but the local secretary would, as a matter of course, refer certain kinds of cases to headquarters. These tended to be either complicated issues which, to resolve, required a detailed knowledge of legislation or law such as in cases concerning pensions, or cases of a specific nature of which the secretary had no experience but which might have come to the attention of headquarters. In such situations headquarters acted as a clearing house for information by putting one secretary in touch with another who may have had experience of a particular type of case. The secretary would also consult headquarters if a case reached deadlock or was in such a state when it came to the local secretary's notice. Generally, however, the local secretary carried direct responsibility for casework even to the extent that headquarters referred back to him local cases in which individual members, unaware of the correct procedure, did not involve the local secretary initially. In the majority of cases, however, activity was restricted to the local level with the secretary acting on behalf of his own members.

In spite of this lack of clarity about relationships between the secretary and headquarters, conflict between the two levels was very rare since both headquarters and the local association wished to obtain the most favourable outcomes for the NAS/UWT members. The role of the local secretary, however, was very clear for as the Guide states,

> If the head refuses to discuss the matter, or is unwilling to try to resolve it, the school representative must consult the local secretary. The local secretary will be able to judge whether to involve the national executive member or to refer the matter to H.Q. staff (NAS/UWT,1977a:6).

The Coventry local association secretary found that a typical line of communication was member to school representative to secretary, as NAS/UWT policy dictates. This happened not because policy dictated it, but because it was the most logical sequence of events. Since most of his work was concerned with casework it was important to the secretary that, as far as possible, the correct procedure was followed (NAS/UWT,1976d).

The local secretary handled between 20 and 30 cases each year, the majority of which were reported to an officers' meeting although officers were rarely involved in casework. The reporting to officers' meetings provided an indirect legitimation for casework procedure as well as an opportunity to test ideas but, since the secretary regarded casework as a therapeutic service to members, he believed that it could best be done by an individual rather than a committee (NAS/UWT, 1976e). It was always essential to retain the confidence of the member, the secretary argued, and this again was easier for an individual rather than for a group, although the treasurer and president were always kept informed about the progress of current cases.

Once approached on a specific matter of casework the secretary decided how to act. He would normally begin by checking the facts from individual members and/or officers of the LEA. He would then telephone or visit the relevant headteacher or contact the LEA officers.

In rare circumstances he might refer the matter to headquarters. From this point the sequence of events depended on the responses to the initial approach. The secretary preferred to use informal approaches where possible and he rarely kept formal records since much of the work was done by word of mouth and was, in essence, an informal service to members rather than a formal protest which needed to be recorded for future reference (NAS/UWT,1976d).

Although, by its very nature, casework involved a wide range of different issues it is possible to identify some aspects of the activity about which general statements can be made. Most of the problems which generate casework tended to be between members and head-teachers and not, as might be expected from the focus on executive meetings, between members and the LEA. It was recognized by the national association, its officers at local level, the LEA and by most headteachers, that headship is in a transitional period as a result of changes within the education service and because of employment, and health and safety legislation. The Trade Unions and Labour Relations Act, (1974), for example, set out a framework for the provision of facilities for union representatives which placed obligations on headteachers. Many heads were unclear about what their obligations were but often a telephone conversation with the local secretary could clarify the situation and avert a larger problem developing at a later stage.

Apart from teacher against headteacher, the most common types of cases concerned salaries, conditions of service or alleged instances of victimization. In all three areas the issues raised tended to reflect local and individual matters rather than national policy.

The work of the secretary, therefore, was locally rather than nationally orientated except insofar as he was required to interpret general principles of policy in specific local instances. If the content of casework was local in its focus, the distribution and amount of it tended to be determined by the pattern of the school year (NAS/UWT,1976e). The incidence of casework was heaviest towards the end of the school year when pressure had had time to build up and when individual tolerance was at its lowest ebb. These cases, whenever they arose formed the largest part of the local secretary's work. The issues which they raised, both for the secretary himself and for the Coventry NAS/UWT, their content and the strategies adopted for dealing with them, form a significant part of the processes of representation within the local association. They are the private part of the association's activities. They can reveal much about the nature of those activities in general, about the role of the secretary in those activities, and about the ways in which those activities are controlled and influenced. To understand this aspect of the local secretary's work it is necessary to explore a number of cases in some detail.

The first case to be considered was in many ways a typical one, involving as it did a conflict between a long-standing and senior member of the NAS/UWT, acting in his capacity as Head of Mathematics in a comprehensive school, and the Head of that school (NAS/UWT,1976c). The department in question, like many other mathematics departments, was under-staffed at the start of the school year. This was made worse when, quite unexpectedly, a part-time member of the department resigned. The specific grievances in this situation were that the LEA had refused to a point a full-time replacement although this would have been possible within the staffing allocation of that particular school. At the same time no action had been taken to replace the part-time member of staff

who had left. The head of department had attempted to bring pressure to bear within the school but without success. At this point the head of department requested help from the NAS/UWT at an executive meeting, (NAS/UWT,1976i), where it was decided that the issue would best be handled by the secretary rather than dealt with by the executive committee as a whole.

The secretary telephoned the Assistant Deputy Director for Secondary Schools who was responsible for staffing. He informed the secretary that the fault lay with the head who had already received approval to appoint a part-time teacher but who had not done so. He also suggested that the head of department should approach the head-teacher armed with that information. At that point the head became ill and was away from school leaving a deputy head who was unwilling to act on this matter in her absence. As a way out of the difficulty the NAS/UWT secretary suggested that a supply teacher should be brought in until a part-time appointment could be made. At the same time he gave notice to the LEA that, should there be any long delay in resolving the matter, action may be taken which, in this case, would involve not covering that part of the timetable which would have been taught by the missing teacher. The case was resolved along the lines which the secretary had indicated.

If action had proved to be necessary it would have required the school representative to call a properly constituted meeting of NAS/UWT members in the school at which a vote would have to have been taken in favour of the specific action proposed. The secretary would have had to be able to verify that such a meeting had taken place and such a vote taken. This done he would have sought the approval of the

local national executive member who, in turn, required approval from headquarters. The local secretary would also have had to inform the other treachers' unions and obtain their passive support, at least. Support for any such action in this school, therefore, would not have been confined to the Mathematics Department. The local NAS/UWT secretary and the Head of Mathematics would have had to mobilize general support among NAS/UWT members in the school. As it turned out, however, the local secretary's ability to identify the appropriate officer with whom to deal within the LEA and to be able to make an informal approach to him, suggesting a suitable solution, prevented the issue from escalating into one in which action by the local association became necessary.

Relationships with LEA officers were not always as productive or cordial as this especially when an NAS/UWT member had a grievance against the LEA. In one particular case, (NAS/UWT,1976c), an NAS/UWT member working as both a teacher and a community worker in a Coventry school had been convinced by the officers of the LEA that he should move from the Burnham salary scale for teachers on to the Joint National scale for social and community workers. After he had changed scales the teachers received a substantial pay award as a result of an enquiry into teachers' pay. Having moved from Burnham, the NAS/UWT member was not eligible for this award and, as a result, he suffered a severe financial penalty for complying with the wishes of the LEA. He consulted the local secretary in an attempt to move back on to the Burnham scale. After contacting the LEA to check the facts of the case the secretary consulted headquarters, as is normal in such cases. In this instance headquarters replied that, as the member had voluntarily agreed to change in salary scales nothing could be done. The local secretary, while recognizing that this might be so, regarded the outcome as unjust.

He made informal contact with the Assistant Director of Education responsible for salaries. He indicated to the Assistant Director that the LEA could be thought to have exerted undue pressure upon the teacher to act against his own best interests. The Assistant Director agreed that such an interpretation was not only possible but likely. As a result he agreed to return the teacher to the Burnham scale. The outcome of this case was, therefore, satisfactory to both the member and the local association. It was achieved almost entirely by bluff on the part of the local secretary whose knowledge enabled him to influence the LEA in a situation in which the NAS/UWT headquarters was unwilling to provide support.

Such disputes over salaries are relatively rare even when there has been a radical restructuring of salary scales. Normally disputes or queries over salaries are settled by individual teachers approaching the City Council's salaries office. Where there was a question of interpretation of the Burnham scale the local secretary normally approached the relevant LEA officer directly and, at the same time, consulted headquarters. Disputes over salaries are rare because they are negotiated nationally. New pay awards, however, were always discussed by the teachers and the LEA officers on the CJC. Such discussions focused on discretionary allowances such as capitation and, since all teachers'representatives shared a common policy of maximum implementation of discretionary allowances, there was little inter-union conflict (NAS/UWT,1976c). The LEA, at this time, pursued a similar policy so conflict was kept to a minimum. Where there were differences these tended to result from policy differences at national level.

Far more common than cases involving disputes over salaries were, for the NAS/UWT, those involving assaults or verbal abuse. On such issues the NAS/UWT national policy is clear and specific. As was shown in Chapter 2, it is based on a willingness to assert and defend the interests of members and to protect them from such attacks. In Coventry cases involving verbal assault were more common than those in which actual assault had taken place. In such cases it was both local and national policy to pursue the matter vigorously. The local association reacted in this way when an NAS/UWT member, visiting a pupil in hospital was attacked by the boy's father, (NAS/UWT,1976e). The boy concerned had been pushed by the teacher, had hit his head against a machine in the woodwork room and had been admitted to hospital. The boy's sister who attended the same school, accused the teacher of assaulting the boy. On the basis of this the boy's father attacked the teacher in front of several witnesses while both visiting the boy in hospital. When the local NAS/UWT secretary was informed he requested the LEA to prosecute the father, which is usual for the NAS/UWT in such matters. The LEA's advisor suggested to the teacher that the father might counter-petition for assault on the boy. In spite of advice to the contrary from his local association, the teacher decided, in view of the possibility of a counter-petition to go no further with the matter. The secretary then reverted to what he described as the standard fall-back position of an NAS/UWT local secretary in such an event, (NAS/UWT, 1976e). He insisted that the LEA should send a strongly worded letter to the boy's parents warning that action would be taken if the incident was repeated.

The letter from the LEA, the threat, or use of legal action all could be used in such situations although the method employed would depend on the severity of the case. For example, should a teacher be verbally abused by a pupil or parent, the Coventry local association's secretary would approach the LEA to encourage the authority to write threatening legal action. In most cases the LEA would do this on the ground that it may prevent something more serious happening and that teachers will see that the local authority is prepared to support them. This procedure tended to be very successful in Coventry and, only in very rare circumstances, was legal action used.

A significant proportion of teachersjoin a union to obtain this type of legal protection, although it is required extremely infrequently. It is important both for the morale of teachers and for the reputation of the union that such matters are handled efficiently and effectively. It is not surprising, therefore, that when a teacher in a larger comprehensive school was assaulted in the staff room by a parent who had been drinking, the NAS/UWT supported a private action against the parent by the teacher (NAS/UWT,1977f). The parent had claimed that his son had been caned although this turned out not to be the case. He then justified his action by claiming that his son had been cut and bruised by being hurled into a stack of chairs by the teacher. The headteacher claimed that there were no chairs in that particular room at the time. The teacher contacted the local NAS/UWT secretary immediately after the assault had taken place but he had been unable to get the LEA to take action so, with support from headquarters, the local secretary encouraged the teacher to bring a private action against the father who retaliated by obtaining legal aid and filing a counter-petition.

At this point the headteacher, a fairly new appointee, who wanted to minimize the conflict, approached the local secretary to persuade the teacher to drop the case. Both the secretary and headquarters took the view that there is a limit to how far teachers ought to allow parents to go. Rather than asking the teacher to drop the case, the local NAS/UWT secretary maintained regular contact with him and encouraged him with the advice from headquarters who were paying the legal fees, that cross-petitions do not usually fool magistrates. This proved to be so and the case ended satisfactorily for the teacher. The secretary expressed disquiet about how the LEA had handled the case because he believed that the authority should have taken action on behalf of the teacher. This case does illustrate how important the association regards the protection of its members in such circumstances.

This service to members is regarded as so important within the NAS/UWT that secretaries do act on behalf of teachers whose membership of the association is in some doubt. This was the case with a craft teacher who wished to claim compensation for an industrial injury (NAS/UWT,1977f). He had been to a private solicitor before contacting the Coventry local association. This was three weeks after the accident in which he lost the top of four fingers while using a twenty year old surface planing machine which had already been the subject of a complaint to the LEA four months before the accident. When he contacted the local NAS/UWT secretary it was discovered that there was some difficulty in establishing whether or not he was a member because he had recently moved from another LEA without informing NAS/UWT headquarters. This situation was not helped by his apparent reluctance to allow the secretary or headquartersto negotiate with the LEA on his behalf. In conjunction with the legal department of the

NAS/UWT the local secretary did obtain industrial injury benefit for this teacher but his exact relationship with the association remained ambiguous.

All of the cases outlined have involved a perceived grievance and have taken the form of conflict between two or more parties. The LEA were involved, and, with the possible exception of the assault case, the role of the LEA officers helped towards finding a solution rather than generating conflict and causing confrontations. Sometimes the Coventry NAS/UWT local secretary found himself being invited by the LEA to play a similar role, preventing or solving problems (NAS/UWT, 1977e). When a rather eccentric teacher of music and German returned from a one year course to find that those subjects had been re-organized to such an extent that he no longer had a contribution to make, he resigned. It was suggested to him that he might have grounds for an action under some aspect or other of employment protection or labour relations legislation when he went to register at the employment exchange. The LEA was concerned about this possibility. The Senior Advisor in the City asked the local NAS/UWT secretary for help since the teacher was a local association member. After consulting headquarters the secretary suggested to the teacher that he should withdraw his resignation until some appropriate solution could be found. A meeting was then arranged between the teacher, the Assistant Director for Secondary Schools and the Advisor for that school with the secretary attending as the representative for the teacher. The teacher went back to the school and the problem was resolved.

This case in particular illustrates what the local secretary regarded as the modern approach to trade unionism which, for him, involved helping to resolve problems and providing solutions rather than

using confrontation as an immediate response to every issue as and when it occurred. He believed that this was the best way to negotiate with officers of the LEA in that it was more likely to produce desired outcomes than any other possible approach. It did not preclude any other form of action and, as was shown, the Coventry NAS/UWT would consider various forms of action but only after other methods had been used. This approach was, then, a difference in emphasis and in priorities and it permeated the whole of the secretary's work on the local executive.

Aims and Methods

In both the public arena of the executive committee and the private world of casework the secretary emerges as the one officer of the local association who consistently deals with the employer at every level. Much of this work was carried out informally. This choice of strategy owed much to the secretary's own views about the nature of trade union activity and depended on good relationships between the NAS/UWT and the LEA. This approach may also be a product of a realistic assessment of the particular situation in which the local association found itself since, as the secretary argued, almost every issue could have been approached in an entirely different way (NAS/UWT,1977e). He could have maximized rather than minimized conflict but, in the long term, this would have been counter-productive. The basis of this approach to trade union activity is, therefore, an image of social relations between the union and the employer which emphasizes co-operation rather than conflict between the two parties. This is not to argue that co-operation with management would out weigh other considerations such as representing members' interests. As the NUPE strike and its aftermath showed, where a choice had to be made between members and management there was never any

real doubt about how the issue would be resolved. This emphasis on reaching accommodations with management where possible shapes rather than determines the approach adopted by the secretary who recognizes that the collective strength of the NAS/UWT is, ultimately, the source of much of the local association's influence since his own activities are evaluated in the light of how far he can be seen to represent his members.

In order to operate in such a way the secretary had to establish and maintain the appropriate relationships with officers of the LEA. Should he fail to do this or should those relationships be undermined in some way, then he might have had to move from a problem solving concilatory approach towards conflict and confrontation. To the extent that he needed the co-operation of the LEA for his chosen modes of operation, his style depended not only on his own views of appropriate union activity, but also upon the views of management. As Brown has pointed out, a strong bargaining relationship frequently depends on establishing contacts with management which go beyond formal meetings (Brown, 1973:134-5). However, as Batstone,(1977:159), has suggested, the behaviour of management can be highly problematical. The NAS/UWT secretary's activities depended, therefore, on what management would allow just as much as they depended on his own views about trade unionism. In this context, therefore, the relationship between the private casework and the public committee work needs to be understood. The former depended for its success on links forged while carrying out the latter.

The informal, co-operative approach was also based on an understanding of the position of the Coventry NAS/UWT and its resources. There are only a limited range of sanctions available to any union if it does find itself in conflict with the LEA. This was one reason why

the secretary frequently attempted to get the officers of the LEA to act rather than immediately resorting to action by the local association. If the authority took a strong line on any issues then, the secretary recognized it would be extremely difficult to move them. Hence the appropriate strategy would appear to be to keep the situation fluid in order that those involved did not take up firm positions which could polarize and, in so doing, make agreement difficult to achieve. Such an approach could mean that the secretary and other officers could become estranged from the members, (NAS/UWT,1977e), but this is generally prevented through informing other officers of actions and cases and through a system of thorough reporting to the executive.

This reporting may not include a detailed analysis of the content of casework but it has always included explanations about general lines of action so that executive members shared, with the secretary, an understanding of why issues had been approached in particular ways. This gave the executive opportunities to comment on these actions. It also enabled the secretary to show how this use of informal contacts and knowledge about who to approach and when, could be used effectively. It revealed, also, an ability on the part of the secretary to recognize that when he was dealing with, for example, disputes over salaries, the national agreements were capable of being interpreted to suit a local situation. Such agreements may , therefore, be regarded as a resource for local officers in their dealings with the LEA and not, as Boraston,(1975), has tended to suggest merely one factor in determining the extent to which a local organization is dependent on a regional or national union official in its local dealings with employers. These agreements, like good union-employer relations, are

a resource for the local union since they, too, are an important factor in determining the extent to which local organizations can negotiate successfully with local employers and, thus, act independently of regional or national structure.

The extent to which the secretary and the local association can operate in this way, depends on a cluster of factors including the resources available, the strength and nature of his support from officers and members, his standing within the local authority and the extent to which he shares with his members a common perception on interests, issues and appropriate actions. Although the secretary normally found himself having to respond to issues, he was usually able to adopt his preferred methods, at least in the initial stages. Where this ceased to be the case it was usually with an issue which, like those involving legal action, he regarded as beyond his level of competence to handle without involving headquarters. The key factors in defining the extent to which the secretary would act independently of headquarters appeared to the the extent to which situations fell within his own experience, the need for legal or similar advice, and the actual location of issues within the wider education activities in Coventry. At times, therefore, the secretary and headquarters co-operated on issues, but at other times the advice from headquarters was disregarded. In many cases headquarters was not even consulted. The local organization, or at least one part of it, can be seen, therefore, to move from a position of complete independence to a position of co-operation, although never as far as dependence. As Boraston, (1975:153), suggests, it would be a mistake to see these three categories of relationships between workplace organizations and full-time officers as entirely distinct. When these categories are applied to a similar relationship, that of the branch and national levels of trade union organization, there appears to be far more

fluidity in that relationship than Boraston's analysis indicates.

From his own statements as well as from this analysis of his actions, it can be deduced that the secretary of the Coventry NAS/UWT intended to act as independently as he could because when headquarters become involved in casework, cases tend to be fought in terms of national policy rather than on the merits of the issue locally (NAS/UWT,1977e). This view was reinforced by the recently initiated regional meetings of secretaries. The informal contacts available to the local secretary are not always going to be available to officers coming in to a situation from headquarters and, therefore, the local secretary's preferred strategy would be in some jeopardy if he regularly involved such officers. Equally the local association adopts a position towards the LEA which is not necessarily the same as that adopted at national level. Militancy rather than accommodation and co-operation has shaped NAS/UWT approaches to national activities. The local secretary's intention, therefore, was to seek to represent the interests of his local members in the light of local circumstances using methods which he believed to be appropriate in the local situation. He did not, however, have unlimited scope for his actions. He was subject to limitation imposed in a variety of ways through the local organization, and he had to recognize the legitimacy of the local organization to bring influence to bear on him in order to control the direction of his actions.

Control and Influence

It is clear that the secretary could not predict what casework issues he might be faced with at any particular time even though he had his preferred methods of responding to them when they did arise.

The same was true of executive committees but to a lesser extent. The information which came to executive committee almost always came to the secretary first although he could not control the content of that information or, necessarily the ways in which he might have to respond to it. The sub-committees and the executive committee members played a part in raising and defining issues, especially the latter, who were responsible for issues relating to blue asbestos in schools, the meeting with the Conservative councillors and some of the issues concerning the NUPE strike. The role of the secretary, however, was central to coping with those issues once they had been raised, whatever the source of them, particularly when they originated outside the local organization. The executive was frequently placed in a position of having to legitimate or challenge action which was taken already or which was about to be taken in the name of the local association.

To the extent that executive and the rank-and-file had a range of alternatives from rejecting actions to legitimizing them, including the expression of confidence in the work of their officers and the methods adopted by them, they were responding, albeit indirectly, to issues which were raised. Seen in one way this could be interpreted as a failure on the part of the executive ever to hold the officers to account for their action,(NAS/UWT,1977c), especially if, as did happen, executive members appeared, at times, to be unwilling to be inquisitorial about the activities of the officers in general and the secretary in particular. On the other hand, this can be taken as an expression of confidence and trust which members had in their officers since the mechanism for registering disapproval existed and were used. At the very least the failure regularly to interrogate the secretary

about the various aspects of his duties appeared to owe much to the recognition by the members that if their collective interests were going to be served by him, then he must be allowed scope to interpret and respond to issues when they arise. An indication that this was the case can be found in one of the rare situations where the executive did not accept that the secretary had acted in their best interests. Once the executive committee, under strong pressure from the rank-and-file, had voted to instruct the secretary to act in a particular way, contrary to his advice, this was immediately followed by a vote of confidence in him (NAS/UWT,1976j).

While it may have been true that this recognition of the need for the secretary to have such room for manoeuvre was based on an understanding of the essentially re-active nature of trade union activities, his options were not unlimited. Executive and officers' meetings served to control as well as to legitimize the actions taken by the secretary, and by other officers; in the name of the local association. It was always possible that such actions may, consistently, be refused legitimation which might, ultimately lead to the resignation of the officers concerned. This would be the most extreme form of control. Alternatively officers could be voted out of office. Two factors appear to be operating, however, which mitigate against this happening and which indicate that the attention paid to formal processes of transfering power and structural arrangements for competing for office, discussed in Chapter 1, is misplaced in an analysis of participation and influence within local unions.

The secretary demonstrated that he was aware of the need to remain within a framework of shared perceptions about his own role and about the activities of the local association. The accommodatory stances towards the LEA, the narrow definitions of appropriate areas of

concern and the primacy of members' interests in setting priorities, while not always as significant in framing attitudes of members as in shaping attitudes of officers, all attracted considerable support from executive members, from many school representatives and, through them, the rank-and-file. Such shared perceptions may also have been in part, derived from national policy on matters like assaults on teachers and salaries for career teachers, although significant local interpretations can be identified. The sharing of ideas through discussions, and the dissemination of information by executive members, school representatives and the local bulletin, all helped to create a common view which, to a greater or lesser extent, was shared by the membership. It was recognized by the officers that members expect to be given an opportunity to make their views clear and that everything possible should be done to ensure that this actually happened. Therefore when groups of potentially disaffected teachers complained about the secretary's action in accepting instructions issued to members by the LEA, the secretary went to considerable lengths to deal with their complaints and to represent their views to the LEA. He argued that they,'Needed to be led and to have their views expressed. If in doubt, avoid conflict with members because solidarity is important' (NAS/UWT,1977e).

If such considerations acted as contraints upon the officers, another set of factors appear to have been acting upon the members. Both officers and members recognize the importance of the secretary to the local association in his own right both as a member of a wide range of committees and because of his standing within the local educational community. To replace him from within their own ranks would prove to be extremely difficult and to replace him with somebody of a similar stature would be even more difficult.

If, therefore, the secretary needs the support of his members and recognizes their need to feel that their views are being represented then the members recognize the advantages of being represented by a secretary with the experience and standing of their present one.

Not all of the controlling influence over these activities stemmed from the relationship between officers and members, the determination of priorities, or the nature of the issue. The secretary's main priority in all these activities, was to represent the interest of his members. This, in itself, was a significant influential factor in a number of ways. When a case was brought to the secretary by a member he had to respond to it because a member was involved regardless of the merits, or otherwise, of the member's position in the case even to the extent of supporting a member who had failed his probationary year twice (NAS/UWT,1976e). Of course his interpretation of the strength of it would determine how he acted but it would not influence a decision about whether or not to act. Similarly the secretary had to respond to an issue as and when it arose, whatever it was. He could not allow his overall work load to determine a suitable time to respond. He had to react when the issues presented themselves. This, in part, explained why some officers felt that the secretary was over-committed to work outside the local association but, as has been shown, there is an alternative view on this. Nevertheless the total work load,the time available to respond and, as has been argued previously, the time limits within which issues have to be dealt with, none of which were normally within the control of the NAS/UWT officers, all exert some form of influence or constraint on how the secretary carried out his duties.

Casework, therefore, demanded an immediate response and always involved reacting to externally generated issues. The informal approach to this work adopted by the secretary did allow an immediacy of response which more formal methods might not have done. The difficulties here stemmed from the relatively covert nature of the responses. This, and the need to respect professional confidences meant that actions which were legitimated by officers' meetings or the executive were only considered after the event and, even then, not in any great detail. Thus the support which was forthcoming for the secretary was of a general nature rather than the giving of specific approval for particular actions. Inspite of this, however, most casework appeared to be successful and members involved seemed to be satisfied with the service they received. This was not always true of the more general activities on the executive committee.

Even on the executive, the ability of the secretary to know who to contact, as well as his more general access to information was the basis of much of his influence over the executive. It was also expected, however, that the secretary would act as a resource for other members by using his range of informal as well as formal contacts to facilitate union activity. He was also expected to use his position on the executive to inform the members about a range of issues and to respond, on behalf of the association, on a similarly wide range of educational matters in which it had an interest. As the year progressed he did encourage other officers to present reports and similar items on the agenda. This gave him time to deal with other issues. The secretary continued to retain his central position on the executive.

There were criticisms of the secretary and his approach to his duties. Perhaps the most important of the private criticisms is the one identified here which was made by the president about the way in which the secretary organized his work. These rarely surfaced in open conflict but the influence of them could be detected in the way in which the president attempted to use the sub-committee system to limit the scope of the secretary's activities by encouraging them to be used for policy formulation after considering documents and other information, rather than restricting their role to that of providing information on which the secretary might base a future response. The secretary could try to control what information went to these sub-committees, although he hardly ever did, but he certainly could not control what those sub-committees did with that information. Perhaps because they were still searching for a role within the local organization, the sub-committees tended to act as a resource for the secretary rather than formulating responses on behalf of the local association.

Public criticism, during this period, tended to focus on the handling of the NUPE dispute. These criticisms and their outcome have been discussed above. The overloading of executive with information was also raised. The secretary's response to this was to justify his actions but, at the same time, to modify his practices by ensuring that more information found its way into the bulletin. In general the response by officers to criticism was guided by two basic principles. The first was that the right of members to express their views and have them represented. The second was a shared

perception about the nature of trade unionism although the president was less committed to this than the other officers were perhaps because of his industrial experience. Some of the implications of these principles have been considered earlier in this chapter. It is important to note, however, in an organization which, at a national level, disclaims a political stance of any kind, that at local level, its stance on appropriate methods for conducting trade union activity can be linked firmly with a political position. This stance on trade union activity has developed from a more general political view which rejected what was perceived to be left wing militancy identified in various organizations in Coventry. It was also associated with the rejection of much of what the NUT did within the City by the NAS/UWT.

The approach to trade union activity was also, it had been argued, related to a recognition of the relative weakness of the local association. Militancy may not always be a function of real strength, but, in this case, action through influence, bluff, persuasion and co-operation were based on a realistic recognition of the Coventry NAS/UWT's position within the local education community. These methods, in themselves, not only formed the basis for a series of justifications and explanations by the officers for the stances they adopted on behalf of the local association. They also served to emphasize the centrality of the secretary within the local organization since, while formal procedures may easily be taken over by others, informal contacts are far less easy to establish. Thus the secretary's concern to prevent, limit and contain conflict was a significant feature of his own approach to his work. At the same time, this approach contained

within it factors which determined the way in which the secretary might be subjected to control and influence both by members and by events themselves. It was also the basis of the secretary's own strength within the local organization for it enabled him, in his turn, to control and influence events and those involved in them to some degree.

Conclusion

It can be seen, then, that the secretary had a range of resources which assisted him in the process of raising, defining and responding to issues. These included his control over the distribution and flow of information, his formal position as secretary, his range of informal contacts which enabled him to use informal approaches on a range of issues and which depended on his membership of various committees within the education service. His personal qualities which earned him respect and trust within the local association and outside it, together with his ability to articulate and use sets of perceptions shared by officers and members alike within the Coventry NAS/UWT, have also contributed to his ability to represent the membership. At the same time he was constrained by the nature of the activities themselves because of which the secretary frequently found himself in a position of having to respond to situations generated outside the local association. He was forced, therefore, into a reactive rather than a proactive stance on such issues. Similarly the demands placed upon him by such issues were beyond his direct control since he could not refuse to respond and had to retain the confidence of members, both collectively and individually. In order to do this, his responses were located within a framework of general principles and shared perceptions.

The officers, executive members and the secretary himself all recognized this situation. Because of it much that the executive did served to legitimate actions already taken. This was especially true of casework about which even the officers' meetings tended only to hear outlines after the event. Executive members were one step further removed from this process, normally only becoming aware of a case if a colleague or their school was involved. In spite of this, no attempt was ever made to induce the secretary to account for his casework decisions or even to report regularly on them. Casework was, by common consent, left entirely to the secretary and the extent to which the executive was informed about cases was left to his discretion. His actions, therefore, were legitimated because they were his actions and because, where justifications were provided by him, they were normally couched in forms which were acceptable to the membership, although this is not to suggest that there was a standard acceptable form for such justifications. As Chapter 9 will show the nature of such justifications depended on the general nature of the issues in the same way that memberships' demands for explanations depended on their reactions to specific issues.

Such justifications and explanations would normally revolve around the nature of trade union activity and the need to represent members' interests in particular kinds of ways. These dimensions are similar to those used by Batstone et.al.,(1977), in their attempt to devise a typology of shop steward behaviour. They suggest that two cross cutting dimensions can be used to explain and interpret the differences in behaviour and expectations of the shop stewards in their study. The first dimension is the extent to which emphasis

is placed on the representative role. The representative, in their typology, is expected to take the initiative and play a major part in the development of policies as well as their execution. In short, the representative adopts a leadership role. Conversely the delegate tended to do no more than carry out the wishes of the members. The other dimension is that of the pursuit of union principles. By this Batsone means the notion of common interest based on collective action which can mean a variety of things from fostering co-operation with management to a demand for worker control and a socialist state. On the basis of these two dimensions Batstone identifies four categories of shop steward activity. These are the 'leader', a representative who demonstrates a commitment to union principles and who is also generally able to achieve goals based on them; the 'cowboy' who is able to play a representative's role, at least in the short term, but who is not committed to union principles; the 'nascent leader' who lacks the ability to achieve goals without help from other stewards; the 'populist' who lacks commitment to union principles and the ability to act as a representative. Batsone notes that 'leaders' were most common among shop floor stewards, while staff stewards adopted a delegate role because they had a greater ambivalence towards union principles. There was, therefore, less of a base upon which leadership could rest, so goals had to be defined in terms of the expressed wishes of the members.

The NAS/UWT secretary did seek to represent the wishes of his members and he did not fall into the category of delegate on most issues. At the same time he did base much of his work on a set of principles which he saw as being derived from trade unionism. He did not, however, believe, as Fosh's 'actives' did, that trade unions

should be politically active in the widest sense, (Fosh,1981:44), or see management-union relationships in conflict terms. If anything, therefore, the secretary was in Batstone's terms, a 'leader' but he was subject to influence from officers and members and he rejected a conflict view of union activity. He was also in an ambiguous position in the structure of the organization, acting sometimes as workplace representative and sometimes as a full-time official might have done.

The categories established by Batsone, (1977), are not entirely helpful in analysing the role of this key officer in the Coventry NAS/UWT, since he does not fit easily into any of them. Yet representation of members' interests and shared perceptions about trade unionism are important factors in determining how he functioned within the local organization and how control and influence were exerted on him and by him. His actions were legitimated by his colleagues in the association and his explanations were accepted or challenged in terms which he regarded as appropriate in the particular circumstances. A wide range of members participated in these processes at various times in the response to specific issues and the ways in which they were handled. The involvement of members in these processes was facilitated by the structuring of participation within the local organization which, immediately prior to this study, had been drastically reorganized as part of the merger between the NAS and the UWT with the intention of improving the way in which members were represented. As a result, members were able to use the structure of the local association to challenge actions carried out in their name. The participations of members in the processes of legitimating actions of officers is significant in understanding the nature of such legitimation and the language in which it was couched. This will be explained in Chapter 9. In order to do this, however, the relationship

between the structuring of participation and the nature of control and influence which is exerted by these processes of legitimation has first to be explored.

CHAPTER EIGHT

PARTICIPATION AND CONTROL

Introduction

The secretary of the Coventry NAS/UWT was clearly the central figure in its activities. He exerted the most significant influence over the executive committee meetings through his control over the information which flowed to and from those meetings and his ability to call upon a wide range of knowledge and experience of educational and union matters which was not available to most other members of the executive. Within the inner group of officers he held a similarly central position. This again was based on his experience, skills and access to information. It is also supported by the access he had established to other key figures within the educational world in Coventry. This was especially useful in carrying out his casework. The officers as a whole tended to act as a supportive, if subsidiary, group to the secretary although there is some evidence that more opportunities were being made available to both officers and other members of the executive to play a more active part in the activities of the association. The recently developed sub-committee structure, the enlarged executive and the somewhat wider representation of the NAS/UWT on external committees combined to make this possible but the actual impetus for change appears to owe much to the growing realization that the work involved in being the secretary of this local association had expanded to a point where it was too great a burden for any one single person to cope with. The need to find ways of encouraging members to be more active and to recruit members who might, in the future, be willing and able to become officers of the local association was also important. Nevertheless the secretary remained the single most significant person in the organizational structure.

The structure of the Coventry NAS/UWT itself has tended to reinforce this centrality of its secretary. In spite of the intention, specifically stated in the 'Guide for School Representatives', (NAS/UWT,1977a), to give special recognition to the workplace representative and to allow dilution of the essential shop steward function of those representatives to take place, the rules of the NAS/UWT do not allow school representatives to develop such functions. In this the NAS/UWT is unlike many other unions in that it does not have a structured and coherent system of workplace representation with the capacity to negotiate on a wide range of workplace related issues. This leaves a gap of some significance in the general organization of the association which local secretaries are expected to fill. In Coventry, at least, the responsibilities given to and accepted by other officers meant that the local secretary was the central focus in the day-to-day activities of the association and also in its overall organizational setting. A competent local secretary had, therefore, every opportunity to attempt to dominate the local association if the membership was sufficiently acquiescent to allow this to happen. The evidence in Coventry suggests that the officers in general and the secretary in particular have considerable scope and flexibility in the ways in which they perceive and execute their responsibilities, but there are limits to the extent to which the members are prepared to allow their officers to act in the name of the local association. These limits are, by their very nature, vague and extremely difficult to define in a precise way. Like much human behaviour the boundaries of acceptability tend only to become apparent when they have been crossed. In this context any sensitive union official is going to try to prevent the conflict which inevitably arises between officers and members when

such boundaries are violated. The most likely and perhaps the most effective way of doing this is to avoid over-stepping them. Failing this the officer or, less likely, the members may attempt to re-define the boundaries of acceptability. In the last resort one party, the officers in most circumstances, might seek to conceal suspect actions or judgements from the other party. In each case identifying those boundaries becomes difficult. It is necessary to resort to the tactic of searching for relatively clear and, therefore, infrequent examples of significant disagreement between officers and members within the union. The Coventry NAS/UWT does provide some evidence of this kind.

The conflict between the officers and the members over the handling of the local association's response to the NUPE Day of Action illustrates how the boundaries of acceptability were seen differently by different groups within the same organization. The officers were prepared to accept the instructions issued by the local authority but the members were not. This instance also shows the very real difficulties which face a union which has to react to a situation in a very limited period of time when the union does not control the situation and when it has very little access to relevant information. At the same time the dangers which are inherent in becoming too closely associated with the arguments which are being used by employers are clearly revealed.

If these are the negative elements which can be deduced from such a situation, there are also a number of positive ones. The willingness of the officers to take up a position which was acceptable to the members indicates a clear ordering of priorities on the part of the officers. The willingness of the members to accept such a shift in emphasis by the incumbent officers indicates, perhaps, a degree of trust and confidence in those officers particularly about the acceptability of their judgement

and actions in the future. The relative infrequence of such events within the Coventry NAS/UWT is, perhaps, the most positive element of all for, unless an extremely cynical view of the relationships between officers and members is taken, the rarity of such conflicts would appear to indicate the existence of a shared set of perceptions about what the functions and priorities of the local association shou d be.

It might be argued, however, that this lack of conflict, rather than being indicative of a shared set of perceptions, is the product of an apathetic or, at least, a fragmented membership which is unable or unwilling to unite in its opposition to the activities of its officers. Apart from the available evidence to the contrary i.e. that the membership actually did prove themselves capable of such opposition in this instance, the evident commitment of both officers and members to the clear sense of professional identity which has always been a part of the NAS/UWT appeal to its members at both local and national level would suggest that, for the most part, the membership might be expected to be less unwilling to act on its own behalf than in some other teachers' unions. The concept of the career teacher and the relative willingness of the association to resort to militant tactics or, at least, those tactics which hitherto might have been regarded as militant when used by teachers has tended to attract people to the association's ranks who recognize the virtues of action and rejected the comfort of apathy. In such a situation it might be less than realistic to attempt to explain away an apparent concorde between officers and members by raising the spectre of the apathetic membership. True, a relatively poor attendance record at branch meetings did cause the officers some concern and did result in the restructuring of the internal organization of the local association. Once this restructuring took place, however, there was a

significant improvement in the level of participation. Perhaps the lesson to be learned is that participation is a function of structure as well as a characteristic of members. The evidence here also suggests that once the mechanisms for participation are available then they will be used when the membership feels so moved. The impetus for such a move it would seem, will be generated by a sufficiently significant violation of the boundaries of acceptability by the officers.

If, then, such boundaries are so significant in the activities of the association what can be learned about them? Clearly they are related to shared perceptions about priorities and appropriate behaviour in particular circumstances. Trade unions, like any form of organization, have their priorities and their methods of achieving objectives related to these priorities. The ordering of such priorities, the relevance and acceptability of such methods, may be seen differently from different positions within the organization. Thus the views of a local secretary with several years experience of office holding within one union may differ from those of a relatively transient president whose expectation of office is limited. There may also be discontinuities between the organization, its structure, its priorities and its methods to the extent that, for example, those who might be thought to have a significant role to play in the organization, in fact, do not. School representatives are a clear example of this. Such discontinuities generate pressure on other parts of the structure. The need to equate priority with action and the need to translate priorities into actions demands that the organization must take account not only of what it wants to achieve but also of what it is possible to achieve. Therefore any ordering of priorities or perceptions of appropriate behaviour has to take account of the nature of the organization, the resources available to it, the nature of the activities in which it is involved and the strengths and weaknesses of its key personnel as well as interpretations of aims and methods.

Almost inevitably these factors are closely related to participation and control. The ordering of priorities is more likely to reflect the views of those who participate in that ordering or those who control the processes of participation than it is to reflect the wishes of non-participants. In the context of the Coventry NAS/UWT this leads to an examination of the nature of participation and of control. Such an examination, however, cannot take place in isolation. It has been shown repeatedly in this analysis that the local association is continually forced to be reactive rather than proactive. Therefore it is reasonable to expect that participation and control within the association will both reflect the nature of these activities and be a product of them. The function of sensitive leadership, that is the function of the officers and, more especially the secretary, in such circumstances is to recognize the ordering of priorities which such a situation, at least in part, dictates; to translate those priorities into action; to ensure that such actions remain within the accepted notions of appropriateness and acceptability, and to recognize that those very notions are a product of dynamic shared perceptions which have to be negotiated and legitimated within the forum of the local organization. Thus notions of acceptability and appropriateness and the patterns of control subsumed therein are a product of the interrelationship between the nature of union activity the structuring of participation and the nature and exercise of leadership within the local association through a process of negotiating the legitimacy for actions carried out by officers in the name of the local association.

The Nature of Trade Union Activity

If acceptability, appropriateness and the nature of control in the Coventry local association of the NAS/UWT are closely related to the nature and purpose of that union's activities, then an initial consideration of the nature of union activity generally ought to structure and inform any analysis of that inter-relationship. The nature of union activity is not entirely determined by the aims and purposes embodied in the trade union movement as a whole or by those aims and purposes as derived by any individual union from the more general philosophy of the movement. This activity does, in the large part however, reflect those aims and purposes. To the extent that the methods available to trade unions, and of which they avail themselves in order to realize those aims and purposes, produce activity which is directly related to those aims, the nature of trade union activity is closely related to the methods employed by the unions. Similarly the structure and organization of particular unions and the ways in which unions and management structure their intercourse reflects the nature of those activities in which the union normally engages. Thus the aims and purposes, the methods, and union-management relationships are all related to the nature of union activity.

Aims and Purposes

If trade unions are generally thought to be ' a continuous association of wage earners for the purpose of improving the conditions of their working lives', (Webb,1924: quoted in Hyman,1971), then this puts trade union activity firmly in the market place with individual bargaining being replaced by collective bargaining. The underlying assumption here is that workers are striving to obtain the best terms for themselves whilst employers are attempting to buy

labour in the cheapest possible market. Thus the aims and purposes of any trade union will be located firmly in the sphere of wage bargaining. Success or failure will be measured purely in terms of economic rewards won by the reconciling of the conflicting interests of union and management within an economic relationship characterized it may be assumed, by the forcing of collective bargaining on employers against their will by strikes and other sanctions. It has been argued, however, that this view inadequately represents both the true nature of collective bargaining and the subtleties of the union-employer relationship. This claim is based on the assumption that the aims of trade unions actually focus on the regulating and, therefore, on the improving of wages and working conditions through the process of regulation (Flanders,1968: for example). As a result of this shift in emphasis away from the activities of the market place, the aims of trade unions acquire a different emphasis. The essential aims and purposes are no longer seen to be related to bargaining but to the protection of members from the unilateral action of employers. Thus the relationship between unions and employers is not purely economic. Rather it is political in the sense that it involves rule making based on power relations between groups who may be in conflict but who, at the same time, may have a significant set of common interests. In each of these approaches to the aims and purposes of trade unions the interests of the members is central to the analysis. Where they differ is in their perceptions of what those interests are and how they might best be furthered.

The National Association of Schoolmasters, from its very foundation, was forced to accept a broader view of trade union activities than that implied by the Webbs' definition because, for much of its early life,

it was excluded from those spheres of activity within which the collective bargaining about wages and conditions took place. It was not until the early 1960s that, through a series of local strikes, the NAS finally obtained representation on the Burnham Committee. Yet its membership had been increasing gradually since its formation in 1922. Even if the association's main concern was with wages and conditions it had to develop policies and practices related to the main stream of union activity but which could be furthered without access to the national negotiating machinery. It also established a set of priorities, the first of which was to gain access to the same negotiating machinery, that were different from those of the other teachers' unions. Local militancy over conditions of service, opposition to equal pay for women and, later, the maintenance of significant salary differentials for career teachers were all salient features of the association's list of national priorities. It also developed a continuing concern with the size of its membership because, in the absence of a legal framework for determining the membership of the Burnham Committee, the size of a union's membership appears to be the only significant factor in determining its representation. It can be seen therefore, that the aims and purposes of the NAS/UWT at national level are related to perceptions of what trade unions ought to be aiming at, and, therefore, based on perceptions of members' interests. Of more significance, however, than abstract notions of aims and purposes, in this instance at least, were the historical and political circumstances within which the NAS was forced to operate. These can be seen directly to have determined the ordering of priorities, even though these same priorities were closely related to the Webbs' views of union aims and purposes, historical and political

circumstances combined to ensure that the NAS had to develop a wider view of appropriate aims and purposes than might have been expected from the Webbs' formulation. Similarly, at a national level at least, the NAS had to become involved in a much wider range of activities than might have been expected from the Webbs' formulation. The example of the NAS illustrates that not all of the aims and purposes of the trade union movement are economic and that not all of the activities derived from those aims and purposes take place in the market place of wage bargaining.

Activities and Methods

Robertson and Thomas (1968), suggest that the aims and purposes of trade unions, and the methods to be used for achieving them, are so closely connected that any formulation of the former must include an indication of the latter. They also take a view of trade union aims and purposes which, whilst containing the essential element of both Flanders and the Webbs, is wider than both of them. They argue that unions should seek to improve the bargaining disadvantages experienced by individual workers by substituting joint or collective action for individual action. This collective action, whilst not being the only form of union activity, is of central significance in the securing of a 'maximum real wage' which is consistent with full or high employment. Workers' jobs are, they argue, to be further protected when a worker becomes sick or is injured and also shielded against the possibility of redundancy. These insurance and protection aspects of union activity spread into other areas such as ensuring that appropriate compensation is available for industrialinjury and providing a range of financial and legal services. The Union is also to secure improved status for members. This involves working for

an improvement in both the physical conditions of the work and the climate within which members work by establishing consultative procedures between workers and management and actively preventing victimization. In the final analysis unions are, according to Robertson and Thomas, to promote the continuity and development of the trade union itself and to promote the interests of the working class as a whole in relation to other groups in political, economic and social matters.

These objectives and activities necessary to achieve them appear to fall into a number of distinct categories requiring different procedures and skills on the part of the union representatives and also demanding a number of different relationships with management. The most obvious of these is the set of activities directly related to the workplace. These concern conditions of work, terms of employment, the protection and development of employment opportunities and the conducting of grievance procedures and industrial disputes. Then there are the benefit and welfare areas which include arrangements for, and payments of, benefits as well as education and training for union officers as well as for the job itself. Worker participation in the control and direction of workplace activities is closely related to this area but is separate from it, since the ultimate objective here may best be understood in terms of achieving improvements in those areas. The nature of these activities and the methods and structural arrangements needed to achieve the objectives might be significantly different. The same would be true for the political activities and methods of trade unions. It may be that some unions are more overtly political than others. One of the factors in determining the level of political activity may be the extent to which the overall priorities of the union and the methods which are used to achieve them, combine to create a self image for that union which is

significantly different from that perceived to be projected by other unions. The same factors may also influence the degree to which the union becomes a forum for commentary on social, economic and political affairs and, in the case of teachers' unions, on education affairs.

At a national level the NAS can be seen to take a series of positions on issues within education which, in turn, are part of a social, political and economic view of the world which is different from that taken by other teachers' unions. These were discussed in Chapter 2. They led to the development of a peculiarly NAS approach to trade unions within the educational sector which is based, at a national level at least, on militancy, on active and vigorous recruitment, on an attitude to wage bargaining which favours one group of teachers at the expense of another, and on a concern to protect the health, safety, and welfare of members even where this involves making some highly critical comments about the nature of the educational service. This relatively militant and highly critical method of carrying out its activities is a result of having a particular set of priorities which place the interests of one group, the career teachers, above those of any other sector of the service. This is based on a clear judgement about the nature of the NAS membership and the interests of those members.

A similar picture emerges at local level. It is possible, however, on the evidence of the local activities and methods adopted by the Coventry NAS/UWT, to identify a number of inconsistencies within the Robertson/Thomas view of union aims and methods. The bargaining over salary scales and conditions of service, although carried out at different times by different bodies, takes place at national level. Local negotiations, often informal or as part of CJC committee work, frequently

take place. Here the predominant NAS/UWT national stances tend, on the whole, to be reflected in local practices and priorities. Where this is not the case a re-interpretation of national policy at local level or an over-riding local priority indentified by a key local officer is often evident. Much of the conditions of service work in the Coventry NAS/UWT is carried out by its specialist committee at the instigation of the local secretary but, as can be seen in Chapter 7, most of the work related to protection, insurance and compensation is done through casework. Here what matters is not the collective might of the Coventry NAS/UWT, such as it is, but the skill, knowledge and access to information and to significant LEA officers that the local secretary has. The work is essentially individualistic, although it can be argued that without the collectivistic 'threat' the individualistic approach might easily be rejected out of hand. Nevertheless the success of the activity depends on the characteristics of the local negotiator rather than on the collective might of his organization. Whilst collective bargaining may be a central strategy avilable to trade unions, it is not the only strategy or even, at local level at least, the most important one for all aspects of union activity. Much depends on the nature of the relationship between management and union.

The local perception of this relationship and of the relationship between itself and the NUT, has led the leaders of the Coventry NAS/UWT to reject one aspect of union activity which Robertson and Thomas regard as important for all unions. It has also led them to reject, in a political sense at least, one of the public stances adopted by the NAS/UWT at national level. The Coventry NAS/UWT views itself as a non-political and non-militant union. The officers of the Coventry association see the NUT as 'left wing' and 'militant'. They believe

that this perception of the NUT is shared by the officers of the local authority who, therefore, not only find the NUT difficult to deal with but prefer to deal with the NAS/UWT and give them preference where this is possible as in the case of time allowed during school hours to deal with union matters. The pursuit of the 'moderate' stance by the Coventry NAS/UWT resulted in them withdrawing their representation from both the Coventry Trades Council and the Campaign for Educational Advancement. The former organization was regarded as being purely party political whilst the latter was thought to be dominated by politically activated extremists. The decision to hold meetings with the new ruling political group on the education committee was also an action which may well not have been taken by a union with a more overtly political stance. The officers and members of the Coventry NAS/UWT clearly regarded their pursuit and protection of their 'moderate' self image and the relationships with officers of the LEA which they saw as being based upon that self image as being more important than their continuing as part of groups which might be thought to be promoting the continuity and development of the trade union movement and the interests of the working class as a whole. What, then, is the nature of the relationship between union and management upon which the activities and methods adopted by trade unions to achieve their aims and purposes appear to rest so heavily?

Unions and Management

The above discussion of the aims, purposes, methods and activities of trade unions indicates that one of the essential characteristics of trade union existence is that they must be expected to be involved in conflict. They are organizations whose very existence is based on the assumption that there is a conflict of interest between employee and

employer. Because this conflict of interest is so radical, Hyman, (1971:8), argues, the dominant mode of interaction between the two sides is always one of conflict rather than of co-operation. It is normally assumed that this conflict will manifest itself in the form of collective action based on collective bargaining. As has been argued above, however, the evidence of the Coventry NAS/UWT indicates that this is only one form of conflict relationship. It may, in fact, be the form to which the local association would only resort in the last analysis, preferring, rather, to use a variety of the official and unofficial approaches. Kerr, (1964), points out that boycotts, political action, restricting output, sabotage, absenteeism, personnel leaving and agreed procedures for peaceful bargaining and grievance handling, rather than operating under duress, all form part of the repertoire of responses to management action which might be available to unions. Some of these responses may involve collective action on the part of a large number of workers whilst others may involve small numbers or may occur relatively spontaneously. In the Coventry NAS/UWT almost all of the responses to management are channelled through the local secretary. The responses are in some way 'organized', to represent the views of the members to a greater or lesser degree and, therefore, are backed up by the possibility of some form of collective action. The local representatives of the association are concerned, however, to try to avoid situations developing in which the inherent sanction of collective action has to become a reality. The officers recognize that this may, sometimes, weaken their bargaining position. This is further weakened because it is unlikely that the members would wish to use some of the other responses which Kerr had identified. To consider, say, sabotaging the examination system, an action which is quite

possible and which might be legitimate from the union's point of view as a way of bringing pressure to bear on the employers, would meet with considerable opposition from many members on the grounds that such action was not in keeping with their perceptions of their professional responsibility towards the pupils. The relationships between the officers of the Coventry NAS/UWT and management are, therefore, not normally based on conflict and hostility. They tend rather to be adversarial in the sense that issues are resolved by argument and resort to rules and evidence as opposed to demands and resort to threats of hostile or damaging behaviour. This has led to situations in which officers of the local association and officers of the LEA can co-operate for their mutual benefit. There are some examples of this in the casework descriptions in Chapter 7 and in the discussion of the executive meetings in Chapter 6. This is not to say that conflicts do not arise. They can and they do. The evidence here, however, suggests that both sides recognize that it is to their advantage to keep conflict to a minimum and to establish agreed procedures for resolving such conflicts. The evidence also suggests that, contrary to Hyman's claim, co-operation between unions and management can take place on a range of issues over a relatively long period of time. Thus there are some significant areas of agreement and some important general similarities between union and management that need to be taken into account when examining the nature of union activity.

It has been suggested that there are two possible explanations for the existence of such similarities and areas of agreement (Deaton and Beaumont,1979). One claim is that the basic decisions about appropriate management-union relationships are determined by the management through a series of actions and failures to respond.

The other view is that the bargaining structure and management-union relationships generally are the result of a power struggle between the two sides in which the wishes of the union tend to predominate. Deaton and Beaumont,(1979:13), suggest that, ' the British Literature, far more so than the American, has tended to see decisions as to the appropriate bargaining structure being very much a management dominated one'. If historical, social and political factors have a part to play in shaping such relationships, it might obviously be the case that one argument holds good for the British situation whilst the other is more applicable to American industrial relations. Before considering this further it is first necessary to examine the nature of the areas of agreement and general similarities in question.

Moore, (1957), has pointed out a number of significant general similarities between union and management organizations. Both type of organization have fairly limited and specific objectives compared with, say, a political party, and both recruit members by a formal act of joining. For teachers, at least, membership is voluntary and they also have a choice of unions. They do make this choice, however, since teachers are among the most highly unionized workers in Britain with about 85% of all teachers employed in the primary, secondary and further education sectors belonging to one or more of the teachers' organizations (Thornton,1982). Membership, whether of union or management, involves specific rights and duties which are, in part at least, codified in formal rules and procedures designed, among other things, to ensure continuity in the face of turnover of incumbent office holders. Unlike most management organizations, unions make specific arrangements to ensure that there is turnover by imposing limited tensure on some offices and by having election procedures.

In the Coventry NAS all executive posts including that of secretary were open to re-election every year but the only one for which re-election was not possible was that of president. In fact most of the officers were normally re-elected. Perhaps this was a reflection of the membership's concern to establish and maintain continuity since opportunities were taken to criticize and influence actions of officers during their term of office. Neither union nor management can claim to have an all encompassing effect on the lives of their members. Each is faced with competing loyalties and claims. For a voluntary organization, however, time and other scarce resources would seem to be at a greater premium than in the management organization. Certainly the Coventry NAS/UWT found this to be the case. In fact, the time devoted to union matters in working hours was directly related to agreements which were negotiated with management at national level but were to depend for their detailed local application to local interpretation based on an assessment of the local membership of the union. Unlike management, unions often have difficulty in establishing just who the members are or where they are at any given time. This was clearly the case in Coventry as the evidence from the local association's treasurer indicates. On the other hand, it is not always easy within any given management structure to establish who has responsibility for particular areas of activity. This can make management-union relationships more difficult than they need otherwise be.

To the extent that management organizations tend to be concerned with administration, whilst unions tend to be concerned with protecting and furthering the interests of their members, they have different characteristics and problems. In unions, as in management, relationships tend to be formalized and routinized by

operating codes and rules of conduct. Union organization, however, tends to have much less technical specialization, a narrower range of functions and smaller resources than management for dealing with the same issues. Unions are organized on the assumption that they will be involved in conflict as part of their regular activities even if this takes an adversarial rather than a collective bargaining form. The ideology of collectivism, whilst not perhaps the only ideology operating within unions, does exert a significant influence on all union members. The rank-and-file members tend to place a heavy reliance on the competence of the leadership and, at the same time, the leadership must be able to mobilize the support of the members in order to establish and maintain credibility and to have its actions legitimized. Loyalty and support at any level of union organization may be more important to union leaders than to management. This indicates a difference in sources of authority. The manager may only be responsible to his superior within the organizational hierarchy and, at the same time, may be responsible to the union's hierarchy and, at the same time, answerable to the rank-and-file whose views and expectations may conflict with those of the union official himself.

For both management and union the relationship between the individual and the organization is a potential source of tension. The ways in which this tension is dealt with helps to establish the characteristics of the particular organization and to distinguish it from others. In both union and management organizations disputes may arise over priorities, appropriate means, claims on scarce resources and over the uses or perceived abuses of authority. In a voluntary organization with an ideology which encompasses collectivism among other elements, such disputes may be of more significance than for,

say a management organization with an administrative ethos. In the voluntary organization the bonds which hold the group together may be more fragile, more vulnerable, and more likely to be broken when disagreements arise. This may be especially true of a local association of a teacher's union when a range of alternatives are readily available. Therefore, the maintenance of unity and cohesion is particularly important for the officers of such a union as, in fact, was the case in Coventry NAS/UWT. The ability of the officers to mobilize and retain support to enable them to deal with management in the knowledge that their actions were not likely to meet a serious challenge from within their own ranks, was a major concern in the Coventry NAS/UWT.

The nature of responses which management and unions are normally called upon to give in the normal course of their activities is also different. Management is expected to predict, plan and initiate, as a part of the managerial process (Drucker,1968). Whilst this may involve responding to unknown situations and to actions and events over which management has little or no control the expectation is that such events can and will normally be foreseen and, perhaps, forestalled. Unions, on the other hand, are normally in a situation where their normal activities involve responding to events over which they may have little knowledge. Where such control or knowledge is available to unions, it is often acquired through co-operative relationships with management and might be seen to be in the gift of management. The activities of the Coventry NAS/UWT Executive and its officers indicates quite clearly that the typical mode of activity for them was re-active rather than pro-active. They spend most of their efforts on responding to actions initiated by management in situations which, by and large, were controlled by management or, at least, were more amenable to control by management than they were by the NAS/UWT.

The pressures of this re-active stance on the local association manifested itself in a number of ways. The need to react exists independently of the ability to react. The members expected their local association to be able to react, and to do so in appropriate ways on a time scale dictated by events or by management rather than by the NAS/UWT itself. The officers had to ensure that they could do this. Several means were employed to help them. Officers' meetings were used as a sounding board for ideas when time was short and as an initial policy formulating body which would, albeit unofficially, present a policy view to the executive committee. The sub-committee system was established to handle information and develop expertise in complex areas in order that the officers might obtain immediate responses from the relevant committee. This structure was only embryonic and still suffered from a number of birth pangs, such as lack of clarity by both sub-committee members and the officers over what was expected of the sub-committees. These sub-committees were also intended to enable the local association to initiate activities and get away from a re-active position. There was little evidence that this had happened or was likely to happen in the near future. In any case it might require a radical change in union-management relationships to enable this to happen at all, since it is on the evidence of this local association, extremely difficult to envisage the development of other significant and relevant forms of union activity.

In pro-active situations policy can be formulated in advance of action. Opinions and advice can be sought on the proposed policy and its implementation may even be monitored and its application adjusted during the implementation process. All the relevant parties can be kept informed of progress and consulted as and when necessary. In a re-active

situation all of this proves to be extremely difficult, if not impossible. In a local trade union with a diffuse membership where communication is less than rapid and may not be entirely reliable, the difficulties are compounded. Nevertheless in the voluntary organization whose purpose is to protect and represent the interests of its members, the seeking of advice and opinion on proposed responses cannot be ignored. Responses must be legitimated by reference to the membership in some way, in order that the representatives of the local association can be seen to be just that. The officers of the Coventry NAS/UWT approached this problem through a number of formal and informal methods. The informal methods involved consultations between significant individuals such as the secretary and long established members who had access to fairly large groups of members within their own schools. The formal methods related to structuring participation within the local association in order that, at the very least, post facto support might be obtained for actions and opportunities made available for discussion and comment. On rare occasions changes were made at such time as in the case of the response to the LEA's directives concerning the activities on the NUPE day of action. That this was not often done may be taken as an indication of the extent to which the members recognized the constraints imposed on their officers by the nature of re-active actions. It may also reflect the success of the officers both in justifying their actions in terms which were regarded by the members as appropriate and in terms of structuring participation within the local association in such a way that those who felt that they had a point to make could actually make it. thus the nature of leadership within the local association and the structuring of opportunities for participation are as crucial to the development of an understanding of control and notions of acceptability

and appropriateness within the Coventry NAS/UWT and other unions as is a knowledge of the nature of union activity and the ways in which that activity impinges on the local association, its officers and members.

Participation and Union Democracy

The structuring of participation within any trade union is important if only because, as Fryer et.al. argue,(1980), the legitimacy of the decisions and actions carried out in the name of the membership depends on the structuring of that participation. The very fact that action is taken in the name of the membership, implies that proper provision has been made for involving the membership in the decision-making and policy formulation. There is also a further implication that the actions or decisions are those which represent the clearest and most faithful representation and the views and wishes of the members themselves. Much of the recent trade union legislation and proposed legislation has been based, among other things, on the assumption that such provision has not been made and that the actions taken do not represent the wishes of the majority of the rank-and-file. Such assumptions are not new. Participation in union decision-making and the ways in which such participation was or was not facilitated by trade union structures, has always been a major concern within the industrial relations literature and research. More often than not, however, this discussion has focused on the national level and it has tended to take as given the re-active nature of much trade union activity rather than recognizing that, at local level at least, the nature of that activity is crucial to any understanding of participative processes in trade unions. The questions in the literature about trade union participation and structure have tended to focus on the question of democracy and to raise

issues about the extent to which unions are democratic and how they may become more so. The fact that only a small minority of members appear to take part in the formal decision-making, has often led governments and managements to attempt to demonstrate that union leaders do not represent their members and have become 'out of touch' with them. It is thus to the advantage of the union officials to be able to establish that the union does operate in a democratic way whilst it may be to the advantage of those on the other side to be able to demonstrate that such is not the case. Anything approaching a definitive answer to the question of what is an appropriate democratic structure, remains tantalizingly elusive, although there are no shortages of attempts to provide the answer.

Michel, (1962), has claimed that there is no question to answer since his 'Iron Law' demonstrates that there is an inevitable upward distillation of power and influence in any formal organization even where the organization is based on explicitly democratic or egalitarian principles. This means, for trade unions', that the leadership will dominate the structure and activities of the union to such an extent that the officers will become entrenched. As a result, effective democratic representation will decline. This, Michels argues, is inevitable because unions will need a strong central administration staffed by experts in order to ensure that maximum benefit can be obtained for members. The specialist knowledge, technical competence and access to information, elevates union leaders above the membership who, lacking such professional and political expertise, forfeit the right to control policy and to be involved in the processes of decision-making. This is reinforced by the strong desire of leaders to retain their positions of power and by apathy on the part of the mass of the members which enables them so to do.

Those who highlight such trends in trade unions are not always implying criticism or advocating a return to grass roots control. Fryer,(1974), points out that there is a powerful school of thought which recognizes the virtues of centralization and bureaucratization as necessary counterbalances to the inherent inefficiencies of democratic organizations. However this view fails to recognize that efficiency is only one dimension of union effectiveness and it may not, in some circumstances, be the one which the members or, indeed, the officers may regard as the most important. In making policy and responding to management initiatives, participation and consent, if not actual control over the activities of the union representatives, are important for the rank-and-file. This is especially so if they feel that their interests are not being truly represented. The debate on the oligarchic nature of trade unions often loses sight of this fact and fails to recognize that participation and effectiveness are not mutually exclusive elements in union structure. In fact they can be complementary.

The strength of Michels' analysis is, however, that it appears to fit some of the facts related to the development of large national unions. It is far less useful in understanding the structuring of participation at local levels within trade unions. Not all unions, especially at local level, are always required to respond to the actions of a monolithic employer's organization in a bureaucratic way. Much of the work of the Coventry NAS/UWT local officers, and, in particular that of the secretary, was done through a range of informal contacts. Establishing such contacts did not require a large administrative structure and nor did handling much of the activity which was carried out through them. Even when formal contacts with the LEA were

established, these tended to be the results of prior knowledge of who was the appropriate LEA officer to approach and how to make such approaches and not the product of a large union administration. Similarly Michels' analysis largely ignores the need for local officers to establish the real legitimacy of their actions in terms of the extent to which such actions are perceived by both members and LEA officers to represent the Coventry NAS/UWT position on any given issue at any given time. The need to obtain such legitimacy through member participation appeared to be the fundamental explanation for the re-organizing of the association's structure in 1976. This was designed to increase member participation in executive's activities and to facilitate recruitment of potential officers of the local association. The sub-committee system also had these objectives among others. If, as much of the evidence suggests, these changes can be taken as genuine, attempts to increase participation and involvement by the rank-and-file, then they must cast doubt on the extent to which the 'Iron Law' is relevant to understanding the branch level activities of this union.

If the 'Iron Law of Oligarchy' fails to account for much of what appears to happen within the Coventry NAS/UWT it also, to a large extent, neglects the experience of shop floor involvement. There is a significant amount of shop floor activity in unions which has led to such phenomena as wage drift, and to the growing importance of shop stewards who represent a crucial link between the membership and the officials (Goldthorpe et.al.,1969; Batstone et.al.,1977; Boraston et.al., 1975; Fryer et.al.,1980). This can be seen to be true even where shop stewards do not, in some cases, have a formal role in the official structure and, in others, lack a well established tradition

of union activity. Even where a shop steward system has not developed a local official, usually the secretary, can assume an extremely significant role in activities, (Boraston et.al.,1975), to the extent that local interpretations of issues take priority over national ones. This was the case in the Coventry NAS/UWT over, for example, the national directives to mount a recruitment drive and national instructions about when and how to involve regional representatives on the national executive in local casework. In these situations the local will tended to prevail until local circumstances changed. This cannot be interpreted as the mere substitution of a local oligarchy for a national one because of the need, discussed above, of local leaders to justify and legitimize their actions to both members and LEA officers.

Even in large unions, evidence can be found to challenge the Michels thesis. It has been shown that under certain conditions a pluralistic democracy is able to exist within a large union and that elected officials can be defeated at the polls in spite of their technical advantages (Lipset et.al.,1956). The International Typograhic Union was, for Lipset, 'the most striking American exception' to Michels' 'Iron Law of Oligarchy' (Lipset,1956:413). It was, according to Lipset, unique in that it had a highly literate homogeneous, highly skilled membership in a cohesive occupational community. The membership exhibited a high degree of rank-and-file participation of some considerable political sophistication. These factors, it was argued, made it possible for this union to be so democratic whilst their absence in other unions has the opposite effect (Lipset,1956:393-402). Since Lipset defines democracy here

is a situation in which,

> organized parties regularly oppose each other for election to the chief union posts, and in which a two-party system has been institutionalized
>
> (Lipset,1956:1),

there is little wonder that he is pessimistic about the potential for such a democracy in other unions.

The analogy drawn here by Lipset between democracy in trade unions and in western political systems rests heavily on his analysis of the latter and is similarly misleading (Lipset,1960). It says little about the success of the institutionalized opposition but, in any case, democratic control does not depend on the fostering of competition between small elite groups. At the very least it requires the power of such groups to be subjected to severe limitations by the membership at large but more significantly, it requires the participation of those affected by the action or decision in the processes which led up to the taking of that decision. In fact to claim that politically active elites supported by organized power block is the only way to exert control and influence over trade union policies and actions is to over simplify the relationship between members and officers.

It has been suggested that rather than being viewed as government and opposition, a more appropriate formulation of the characteristics of trade union control and government would be that of a small union leadership faced with a large segment of apathetic membership which could, in some situations, be mobilized (Martin,1968). Democracy would then be seen to exist in those unions which factions could be seen to function without actually acquiring the status of a fully-fledged opposition. Thus the criteria for the existence of

democracy in unions become the continued existence of factions and the freedom to oppose official policies. However, the prevalence of factions has its roots in the same tradition as Lipset's pluralistic model, at it is simply a less rigid re-formulation of that model and, as such, it inherits those defects which plague its intellectual antecedents. This is compounded because it gives no indication of how a successful faction should be identified, nor does it recognize that the existence of factionalism could as logically be explained by a lack of democratic processes in a union as by their assumed presence. This view also presents the mass of union members as apathetic without looking at processes and structures that might reinforce non-participation, which is what Martin appears to mean by apathy. The Coventry NAS/UWT example, admittedly on a much smaller scale than that considered by Martin, seems to indicate that changes in structure can have a significant effect on the levels of participation and that, if and when an appropriate issue arises, the members may mobilize themselves.

Both parties and factions are dismissed as irrelevant to the problem of union democracy by Edelstein who argues that what is necessary is 'effective electoral opposition' (Edelstein,1967). This is identified as the closeness of elections for the top positions in the union hierarchy. The measurement developed for establishing the degree of closeness in any particular election, is the number of votes cast for the runner up expressed as a percentage of those received by the successful candidate. The defeat of an incumbent was, naturally, regarded as more effective opposition than the ordinary use of this measuring technique could possibly indicate. For any given union the various individuals and groups indentified in this way must all be seeking political power which will, in turn, lead to actual total or

partial control of the union for the system to be regarded as democratic. For political organizations this may be an acceptable premise but, as several officers of the Coventry NAS/UWT have argued, trade unions are not necessarily political in that sense. Rather they are concerned with those activities which are necessary to protect the interests of their members. It is unlikely that, in most unions, the time or resources for campaigning or the significant ideological differences to be found between politicians will be present. Such differences as there are will tend to be on specific policy details or over the general acceptability of candidates rather than on ideological or philosophical differences which are necessary to sustain political conflicts of the type envisaged by Edelstein. The exception to this might be thought to be the'moderate/militant' dichotomy often mentioned in popular discussion of union affairs. This distinction may conceal more differences than it reveals similarities, since it presupposes that, even if the terms mean anything in practice, that the behaviour of those thus labelled will be consistent with their label over a period of time and over a wide variety of issues. It also presupposes that behaviour regarded as 'militant' at any given time will always be so regarded. The NAS/UWT provides an interesting example of the difficulties of using such terms as 'militant'. Its growth, development and appeal to its originally all male membership can be seen to be based on a relatively activist stance and on a willingness to take strike action. Such action is labelled as 'militant'. On the other hand, many of its stances on issues such as corporal punishment, teacher stress and school discipline may not be shared by other educational 'radicals' who might also be thought to be 'militant'. At local level the Coventry NAS/UWT has worked hard to develop a 'moderate' position as opposed to that

taken by the 'militant' NUT. In organizations whose sole purpose is to seek political power, such inconsistencies may be tolerated and their effect minimized. In other groups, however, this is far less likely to be the case and make it unlikely that the difference between individuals and groups which Edelstein's view of democracy in unions appears to require will, in fact, ever be present.

Lipset, Martin and Edelstein all assume that different groups will want or even need to obtain control of a union. There are many ways in which influence can be brought to bear on the leadership of a union by small groups which do not want to bid for control of that union. The extent to which officers of the Coventry local association felt free to interpret national policy in the light of local circumstances illustrates this. So do the ways in which the membership influenced the officers in order to obtain procedures for negotiating with management in the event of future one day strikes by other unions. In neither case could be actions be said to be a bid for control of the union or even an expression of lack of confidence in the leadership. It is this area that the pluralistic models are at their weakest because they encapsulate rather crude concepts of control and power based on an 'all-or-nothing' view that either a group rules or it does not. If it does not then it is devoid of any influence over the formulation of union policy. If it does then it controls policy completely. Such a view is inaccurate when applied to unions generally since, whilst formal power may appear to be exerted by small groups, such groups may, in many cases, be subject to a variety of pressures and influences. These influences were certainly present in the Coventry NAS/UWT.

In concentrating on the search for a common set of means by which trade union members may exert control over their leaders and in labelling such means as democratic the fact that the desired end, influencing union leadership, is actually achieved in a variety of subtle ways has been overlooked. Similarly ignored is the possibility that those arrangements which are appropriate for one union may not be suitable for another. As Allen (1954), has argued, a union is a voluntary organization which is not based on theoretical concept such as democracy which exists independently of it, but on the ends which it serves. He regards the fear of losing members as the main factor which compels union leaders to remain responsive to the rank-and-file. Certainly the local NAS/UWT leaders in Coventry repeatedly argued that their main concern at all times was to ensure that the membership felt that their views had been adequately represented in the right place and at the appropriate time. Turner, (1962), in attempting to combine structural means with the perceptions of union members, has suggested that one significant indication of how democratic a union is, would be the extent to which its members can and do take part in what it does. Another may be the extent to which passive members identify their leader's policies with their own interests. Thus the focus on union leader-member relationships can be seen to have shifted away from a concern with relatively rigid political arrangements for the transfer of power within unions as an expression of the extent to which unions are democratic to an emphasis on participation and opportunities for participation at a variety of levels. In the Coventry NAS/UWT the political, organizational and administrative skills which would be necessary to sustain a two party system of competition for union control are in extremely short supply. This was one reason for the attempts

which were made to encourage more participation in the local association's activities. In fact, rather than being a two party system the Coventry NAS/UWT appeared to be a very loosely structured single party system with a small number of officers regularly reporting to a larger representative body through which the rank-and-file can express their opinions as well as doing so through direct contact with the officers themselves. Election to office seems to have more to do with the competence of individuals than with ideological or even organizational differences. Thus opportunities for members to become involved in the formulation and implementing of policy take on more significance than do considerations of structural arrangements for the periodic transfer of power within unions.

Participation and Involvement

Approaches to the structuring of participation in unions which concentrates on institutional arrangements for the regular transfer of power between competing groups obscures a number of significant issues. The control and influence exerted by the rank-and-file over the officers may take a variety of forms only one of which need necessarily be the removal of officers from office. Participation of the rank-and-file is not always, as many of the discussions on union democracy tend to assume, against the best interests of the officers or against their wishes. Participation and involvement of the rank-and-file can be as necessary for union officers as it may be for the members themselves. As Fryer,(1980), argues decisions and actions taken in the name of the membership imply that proper provision has been made for the involvement in decision-making and that the views presented in the name of the members are, in fact, the clearest and most faithful representation of the position taken by the members. This fact, in itself, may be regarded

by union officials as a powerful argument in favour of ensuring that proper procedures and processes are available for members to become involved in decision-making. The mere existence of such procedures does not ensure that they will be used. Nor does it indicate anything about when or why they might be used.

The analysis of the executive meetings and of the work of the officers of the local association show that involvement and the use of available procedures is, for the majority of the membership, issue-specific. It depends to a large extent on how they react to actions being taken in their name. This reaction is related to perceptions of appropriateness which were discussed above. These perceptions are, in turn, related to forms of legitimation and justification used by both officers and members. These will be examined in the next chapter. It can be seen, however, that participation and involvement on the part of the rank-and-file serves not only to control or, at least, influence the activities of union officials. The Coventry NAS/UWT, in common with most other unions is continually concerned with job regulation as well as with representing the interests of members. The literature on union democracy, for example Child,et.al.,(1973), often fails to recognize the significance of this. In order to carry out the regulatory function, even where it is clearly subordinate to other forms of activity, officers must be able to carry the members with them. Thus control of the membership may, in many cases, be as significant as control by the membership.

Moran,(1974), recognizes this when he claims that the most crucial issue facing unions is not how the rank-and-file can control the leadership, but how union officers can ensure that the rank-and-file can be led. He suggests that the answer may be found in the formulation of involvement developed by Etzioni which emphasizes the individual

member's involvement with the union. Moran argues that this involvement was a combination of calculative and moral commitment which produces compliance on the part of the rank-and-file which was basically calculative and normative. On the basis of this compliance union officials are able to identify appropriate ways of appealing to the membership and appropriate patterns of control and influence. To some extent this analysis is unsatisfactory since Moran fails to explain why Etzioni's typology of compliance and involvement was thought to have more to offer than, say, the Weberian analysis of types of authority which pays attention to tradition, legal-rational and charismatic dimensions. In the Coventry NAS/UWT, whilst patterns of involvement similar to those discussed by Moran were in evidence, the undoubted centrality of the local secretary in both the organizational structure and the actual activities of the local association owed much to his own personality and skills, to the traditional place accorded to the local secretary within the organizational structure, and the primacy given to the local secretary by the regulations which govern local association activities. More significantly, however, is that Moran does not recognize that participation and involvement depend on interactions between members and officials. The nature of the involvement may well change over time and according to issues. Thus where elections are concerned there may be involvement based on normative compliance, on a feeling that members ought to participate in elections. Other forms of involvement may be far more instrumental. In fact, the reaction of the rank-and-file to the stance taken by the LEA over what teachers who were locked out of their schools should do was, in part, instrumental.

By focusing on how leaders may control the rank-and-file an analysis may result which is as misleading as that based on the search for union democracy. Discussions of participation and involvement should also take into account the essentially re-active nature of union activity, since this makes it inevitable that much of the participation will be concerned with legitimizing actions already carried out.

In much research on trade union membership and participation, it has been argued that activists and non-activists are different in their attitudes towards trade unions, their willingness to take action, and their political views (Fosh,1981, for example): Activists are thought to be more militant, more radical and more left wing than their non-activist brothers and sisters. A similar set of assumptions can be identified in the recent Green Paper on trade union government (Department of Employment,1983). The belief implied here, in the inherent conservatism of the majority of trade union members has led the conservative right to advocate an increase in rank-and-file participation and involvement while the left has defended the rights of unions to devise their own participative and consultative procedures. Although both positions are based on an over simplification, they share the general assumption that once individuals have joined a union, they attach themselves to either active or passive groups. These groups have received considerable attention but the activists appear to be more identifiable and accessible. Their characteristics have been listed and compared in an attempt to make statements about why the activists appear to be in such a minority. Sayles and Strauss,(1967), conclude that workers with high status are more likely to participate in union affairs than are low status workers. Low status participants may be discouraged through lack of status in

terms of age, experience, job skills and position on the production line. Spinrad,(1960), in a review of literature in this field, also found that union activity was typically associated with high status but small plants and a stable work force contribute towards a more widespread involvement. The pattern of experience and status is certainly confirmed by both the officers of the NAS/UWT and those people who become school representatives although for the latter, experience in union affairs is far less significant.

Many of these conclusions are unsatisfactory because participation and involvement are not always related in the research to the structure of the local union organization. Thus, when an organizational change such as the enlarging of the executive in the Coventry NAS/UWT, takes place, its significance may be missed. As Goldstein,(1952), showed, some patterns of structuring participation may encourage involvement more than others since over 80% of his sample were active in union affairs at workshop level but participation at branch level was very low. This leads to a more critical analysis of the assumption that union members are either participants or non-participants and that the two groups are distinct entities. Some indication of levels of participation is also required. Sayles and Strauss,(1967), have attempted to develop categories of participation such as 'low', 'high','erratic', and 'conservative' but failed to examine the circumstances in which individuals or groups might move from one level of participation to another. The Coventry NAS/UWT evidence suggests that a more fruitful approach to participation is to see it as a continuum moving from merely belonging, an act in itself which involves making choices between unions, to holding senior office in the local association. Within this formulation it should be remembered

that the union itself is not the 'given' which most studies take it to be. The NAS/UWT's need to encourage new members and increase involvement to give officers the credibility and the union representation it desired, created conditions in which becoming involved was relatively easy. Similarly the sub-committee structure which was designed to help the secretary to overcome some of the difficulties which stemmed from the re-active nature of union activities also facilitated participation. Thus a union's external relations and its internal structure are significant in determining the level and the nature of member participation.

In those factors which encourage participation are located within the structure of the local association and determined, in part, by the nature of union activities, then those barriers to participation and involvement may similarly be unequally distributed throughout the local association. Fryer,(1975), has noted that barriers to membership participation may be historical, organizational, ideological and environmental. In NUPE he found that such barriers included the role of the full time officials as both organizers and initiators, the lack of solid traditions of trade union activity amongst members, the recently developed shop steward function which was being carried out by members who, themselves, lacked experience and trade union tradition, the fragmentation of the membership, the implications of a centralized bargaining structure and the attitudes of both managers and full time union officials. Elsewhere Fryer,(1974), has suggested that the rapid growth in certain areas of the union structure may lead to a situation in which the membership, rather than participating more, may become heavily reliant on a small group of 'dedicated activists'. In the NAS/UWT full time organizers at regional level do not exist although the part time regional members of the

national executive can hold key positions. In Coventry this was not the case because of the existence of a group of experienced local officers. These officers themselves noted, however, that it was difficult to recruit members of the 'right calibre' to the executive. By this they appeared to mean active members who would share the local stances on 'moderation' and yet had what Fryer calls 'solid traditions of trade union activity'. These difficulties reveal themselves especially in the recruiting to school representative office and controlling the elections to that position. These areas are important more because of the national attempts to develop a shop steward function for the school representative than for what the school representatives actually did. The local secretary recognized what was, for him, a potential danger in that the school representatives might attempt to initiate action which the union might then have to support. The alternative is to alienate members by not supporting action which may be quite legitimate in itself even though it was organized in inappropriate ways and might thus leave the local association open to attack from head office, employers and other unions. There was also the possibility that small groups of members might become heavily dependent on such a school representative and seek to work against the main stream of local association activity. There was little evidence to suggest that this was or even might happen in Coventry at this time. Disagreement took place within a framework of consensus on major issues and major strategies to a large extent.

The pattern of involvement and participation in the affairs of the union at local level as revealed through the activities of the local officers and the executive, indicates that where there is a relatively open structure or where a structure has become more open then participation will reflect this openness. Participation will

not necessarily follow a pattern which is entirely consistent. Although membership involvement in executive activities increased during the period of this research, there were striking variations in both the quantity and nature of the participation. Perhaps the most significant factor in determining levels of participation given that a structure which allows or encourages involvement actually exists is that of time. As was noted when discussing similarities between unions and management neither organization has an unlimited claim on the time of its members. Membership of both will change over time. Participants may come and go over the period of time it takes to resolve a situation. Of particular significance is the extent to which time is given up by individuals to a particular issue. Such differential participation shapes issues and their outcomes. Thus there may have been a proportion of rank-and-file members who might have objected to the NAS/UWT leaving the Trades Council or the CEA. They, like the executive members who spoke against those decisions and who were won over by argument, were not prepared to devote time to making those actions into major issues. Similarly when the case of a head refusing to appoint a replacement for a teacher who resigned was brought to the executive, it was handled almost privately by the secretary who was not pressed on this matter by the executive. It did not become a major issue even within the executive. The 'blue asbestos issue' in the same school did receive far more time and involved executive members in much more direct contact with the officers of the LEA. It was a major issue. So was the handling of the NUPE day of action. In response to this many members who were not normally visibly active, gave up time and became involved in changing the nature of the local response to this and in shaping future action. How might these differences be accounted for?

Conclusion

The structure of the Coventry NAS/UWT allows its members to participate in its activities in a number of ways. The enlarged executive has created opportunities for a larger total of members to be involved. This hoped for increase has actually taken place. Within the executive, the sub-committee structure created opportunities for executive members to play a more active part in the role of the executive than might have been possible before because participation and involvement was structured rather than left to those willing and able to force their way forward at executive meetings. The membership at large, as a result, had better informed and somewhat more active members in the schools. This was especially true in schools benefitting from extra members on the executive as a result of the size of the workplace membership.

The officers were all active within the education community in Coventry. As a result members who did not know them personally at least knew who they were. They knew therefore who to approach and knew whom they were approaching on both general and private casework matters. The membership was relatively well informed, partly through school representatives, partly through the local association's bulletin and partly through relatively extensive press coverage given to the secretary and other officers. Thus members were often well aware of the actions which were being taken in their name. Equally they were aware of the stances being taken by the officers and the difficulties they faced. In short, the rank-and-file members of the local association and the ordinary members of the executive with whom the rank-and-file were often in closest contact, were aware of the essentially re-active nature of much of the work done by the Coventry NAS/UWT and of the justifications and legitimations given for those activities.

The responses of members to the ways in which their union representatives carry out their functions is, as has already been argued, determined by the extent to which those functions are carried out in ways in which are regarded by the members as appropriate. As has been shown above, it is difficult to identify exactly what will be accepted by the rank-and-file as appropriate until disagreements arise. Similarly, it is not always clear what the ordinary members of the executive will regard as appropriate action by their officers. The boundaries of appropriateness may be seen most clearly when disputes arise within the local association but these are relatively rare. The fact that such disputes do not happen often is, itself, significant. It cannot merely be argued, however, that the infrequency of challeneges to the leadership is a product of an apathetic membership. Even if a case might be made out for an apathetic rank-and-file, the ordinary members of the executive can be seen frequently to be in positions to make such challenges had they so wished. Thus where the structure of the union allows participation and involvement challenges to the leadership and disputes over actions are to be expected.

It is in the nature of the aims and purposes of trade union activity, requiring as it does, that members' interests are interpreted by their representatives, that such areas of disagreement should arise. It is in the nature of the relationship between employees' organizations and employers' organizations that disputes occur between them and that areas of co-operation also exist between them. Both disputes and areas of co-operation are open to a variety of interpretations and explanations, the provision of which will, almost inevitably, result in disagreements within each type of organization. How, then, are these areas of disagreement within unions kept to a minimum? The evidence from this

study suggests that it is to be found in the existence of sets of shared perceptions within the local organization. These perceptions reveal themselves in the ways in which re-actions receive post facto legitimation, pro-actions are given de facto justifications and the ways in which various positions taken up by both officers and members are critized and defended. The arguments used can be seen most clearly in the leadership behaviour of the officers of the local association as they carry out their union functions.

CHAPTER NINE

JUSTIFICATION AND LEGITIMATION

Introduction

Trade union officers, executive committee members and the membership at large, view their union in terms of what it does and how it does it. These perceptions are shaped by more or less clearly formulated views about what is appropriate and what is acceptable for unions, and their officials and members, to be doing in any given context. It might be argued that the closer any one individual is to the centre of activity in any organization, the more clearly formulated will be that individual's perceptions about appropriateness and acceptability . Certainly an awareness of these perceptions, together with the knowledge that the perceptions of others will be different, can exert a significant controlling influence over the actions of union officers. Batstone, Boraston and Frenkel, (1978), have argued that generating a sufficiently high level of shared perceptions was vital in the social organization processes which might lead up to unions taking strike action. Elsewhere they have termed this activity the 'mobilization of bias'(Batstone,et.al.1977). They argue that the behaviour of union leaders can be divided into a number of different categories according to the ways in which they sought to mobilize members, or according to the justifications for not doing so.

The term is derived by Batstone,et.al.(1977:10), from the work of Lukes, (1974:21-5), Schattschneider,(1960:71), and Bachrach and Baratz,(1970). It refers to a 'set of predominant values, beliefs, rituals and institutional procedures that operate systematically and consistently to benefit certain groups at the expense of others'

(Bachrach and Baratz,1970:43, quoted in Batstone et.al.,1977:10). Batstone,(1977), argues that 'bias', when mobilized, fosters particular views of the workplace and particular patterns of behaviour. It is directly related to an analysis of leadership behaviour in the work situation and, in particular, on the relationship between the activities of shop stewards and their orientation towards what Batstone identifies as trade union principles. The typology which derives from this analysis is based on an examination of the extent to which emphasis is placed on a representative or delegate role and on the importance attached to the pursuit of trade union principles.

This is taken to mean those principles based on the common interest of the collectivity. Batstone et.al. point out that these interests can be extremely elastic. They argue that such elasticity of values can be an important means of legitimating a variety of different goals whilst new situations may foster a re-emphasis within this range of interpretation (Batstone, 1977:II). It also suggested that trade union principles tend to assume an essentially accommodative hue. This is because the existing web of rules and procedures within which both unions and management operate recognize and reinforce the centrality of certain management goals, as well as providing the unions with an opportunity to restrict management action. All union members and officers operate in such a context. This analysis is entirely consistent with the discussion of the nature of trade union aims and methods above.

Willman,(1980), has argued, however, that Batstone et.al's four-fold classification of shop steward leadership based on the relationship between leadership behaviour and trade union principles is inadequate because it fails to be specific about the nature of collectivism. This vagueness, argues Willman, leads to the conclusion that the pursuit of trade union principles is subordinate to, and the servant of, the pursuit of organizational strength unless, that is, such

organizational strength is seen in terms of 'larger goals'. The problem then becomes the identification of those goals, suggests Willman. Within the Coventry NAS/UWT there is a recognition by both officers and members that the organization is relatively weak. The preservation of unity, rather than organizational strength, is the major concern together with maintaining a workable negotiating relationship with management. At times those principles which in Batstone's terms would be identified as collectivist, may be subordinated to the need to preserve that relationship and to conceal that weakness.

Therefore, neither Batstone's analysis nor Willman's critique are entirely apposite in this instance. Both fail to pay sufficient attention to the extent to which appeals to collectivism are merely one type of appeal which can be made by leaders to followers. In some situations followers may not accept the legitimacy of justifications couched in collectivist terms. Leadership tends to be issue specific. Either different leaders emerge in different situations or leaders have to provide different forms of justification in order that their actions will be legitimated by followers. This appeared to be particularly true of the officers of the Coventry NAS/UWT when attempting to obtain legitimation for de facto reactions to management initiatives. Accommodation rather than collectivism tended to be the dominant mode of legitimation by the officers themselves for their responses to management. The members, recognizing the essentially re-active nature of much trade union activity, tended to share this perception but, as will be seen below, this was not always the case.

It is also arguable just to what extent Batstone's conceptual framework and theoretical conclusions have general relevance to other unions. Kessler,(1979), found that the majority of General and

Municipal Workers shop stewards in his survey would be low on "pursuit of union principles" although this was based on interviews rather than on an analysis of action on the part of those shop stewards. He found the same with the Transport and General Workers shop stewards. One of the TGWU stewards replied to the question, 'Why did you become a shop steward?', with the answer that he did because nobody else would. Similar responses were found in the survey of NAS/UWT school representatives discussed in Chapter 4 above. In their case, however, a further possible dimension exists. Batstone implies that there are only two dimensions contained within the 'bias' which might be mobilized. Thus if trade union principles are not adhered to, then individual interests become the main guidelines for action. It has already been suggested that 'accommodation' between union and management might be of more significance than has hitherto been recognised. In the same way, in the case of a union claiming to represent 'career teachers', professionalism may, at times, be a mobilizing principle at various times and on various issues. Both the school representatives and the local association officers needed to take this into account in a variety of different situations.

It is being suggested, therefore, that, in the context of the Coventry NAS/UWT at least, 'mobilization of bias' means more than a set of generalized principles derived from trade unionism which guide certain shop stewards in certain situations. It can be argued that any behaviour identified as leadership is, in practice, both issue specific and the product of the inter-relationship between leaders and followers. As Pedlar,(1973), has pointed out, where a representative lacks access to vital information another leader may emerge, and where issues are central to the norms of the group a vote may be taken which relegates an official to the status of reporter. Thus a union officer may

actually have a series of leadership stances depending on the nature and origin of the issue. Similarly members may adopt different responses to the actions of that official. In the same way different aspects of the beliefs, values, rules and procedures may be mobilized to legitimate, justify, or explain particular actions on the part of both officers and members. The extent to which the different parties accept the actions and recognize them as being generally legitimate may depend on the extent to which the 'bias', or, in this case, legitimation, which has been mobilized is derived from shared perceptions of situations.

It has been argued that much of the activity of the Coventry NAS/UWT is based on the existence of such shared perceptions. These are derived from a series of historical, educational, political and economic circumstances which have helped to shape the national and local structure of the organization. The extent to which the legitimation provided in any given circumstance will be accpeted, however, depends on the ways in which the language in which that legitimation is couched actually reflects the dominant elements in the perceptions of the members about the situation at that particular time. Thus, for officers providing such legitimation more is involved than the mere mobilizing of bias. The situation demands that appropriate and shared perceptions are expressed in order that justifications and explanations are accepted as legitimate by those receiving them. This is an inter-active process involving both officers and members and, as such, is a significant extension of those activities which may be subsumed under the term 'mobilization of bias'. What is important here is the language which is used to justify action, the language of legitimation.

The Language of Legitimation

The inter-action between officers and members, the responses of various groups to that inter-action, and the articulation of those responses through the language of legitimation, provide a set of explanations about how notions of acceptability and appropriateness come to be defined and shared, and of how these shared perceptions serve to influence and control the behaviour of both officers and members. This inter-action helps to make sense of the ways in which the actions of officers are modified by perceptions thought to be held by members even before those actions are implemented. It also provides a way of analysing the types of justifications for action given to members by officers for their actions, especially those reactive responses to management initiatives. The concept of the language of legitimation and the content of the different elements which form part of the legitimation process are, therefore, central to an understanding of this inter-action.

Control of leaders' actions, followers' responses and the extent to which various groups participate in union affairs, given that the union structure allows sufficient opportunity for participation, will depend to a large extent on the legitimation process. It is through this process that shared perceptions about the nature and content of union activity, about the acceptability of the various justifications and explanations which are offered to members, about the appropriate scope for control and influence of officers and members over each other, are developed. It would, however, be difficult to sustain the view that within the Coventry NAS/UWT the language of legitimation was used systematically and consistently to benefit certain groups at the expense of others. More often it was used by groups, expecially the officers and the ordinary members of the executive, independently of each other,

to impose meanings and interpretations on events, and as a significant part of the processes involved in giving, receiving, refusing and accepting justification, legitimation and explanation.

In the Coventry NAS/UWT language of legitimation can be seen to have at least four distinct elements. These are the individualistic and collectivist elements identified by Batstone together with the elements of professionalism and accommodation which have been outlined above. These four elements do not form an internally consistent belief system nor do they, taken together, produce either actions or legitimations which are always consistent, for

> value systems ... are not systems of single dominant values but are, instead, interlocking networks of dominant and varient value positions which differ ... in that there is a variable ordering of the ... value orientations. (Kluckhohn and Strodbeck, 1961:366).

Thus we should expect variety within unity. In an attempt to secure unity, a variety of legitimations may be used. It can be argued, therefore, that just as the elasticity of union values enables shop stewards to interpret them in different ways at different times, then the availability of other elements within the values system of a trade union adds another range of justifications and legitimations to those available to NAS/UWT members, representatives and officers in Coventry.

It is the use of, and the inter-relationship between these elements that help to fix the boundaries of appropriateness and acceptability which de-limit officer activities and membership responses and which provide the real underpinnings for the patterns of control and influence which exist within the Coventry NAS/UWT. In order to explore the ways in which these four elements, individualism, collectivism, professionalism and accommodation, actually operate in particular situations

it is necessary to recognize that the elements do not form opposite ends of two cross-cutting dimensions in the way that, for example, Batstone,(1977), combines his elements in the mobilization of bias. Rather they exist as four separate and independent aspects of the language of legitimation to which different groups may appeal over the same issue at the same time or at different times. A detailed examination of the content of the four different elements will make this clearer.

Individualism. It has recently been argued that the 'culture of individualism' is deeply rooted in British schools and therefore in the teachers' workplace (Hargreaves,1982). Therefore one of the dominant value systems or sets of ideas which influence the workplace organization of teachers is individualism. Whilst this study is not concerned with the various ideological stances taken by teachers on education it is necessary to touch briefly on the implications of one of those ideologies for the workplace organization of teachers. Hargreaves,(1982:77-112), suggests that the logic of all forms of educational organization based on progressive views of education, serves to promote individualism at the expense of collectivism. This is because such approaches to education are based on the individualized structuring of teaching and learning which, in turn, emphasizes freedom, autonomy and individual initiatives in all forms of activity. As a result, the previously recognized collectivities in school such as classes, forms and houses have either disappeared or developed into aggregates of individual activity. Thus, forms of collective activity are deemed inappropriate to many forms of educational activity.

This is true of teachers and their workplace activities although not to the exclusion of collectivism, professionalism or accommodation. In common with Batstone's staff union members, most, if not all, of the NAS/UWT membership recognized the desirability and the legitimacy of

pursuing certain workplace activities through individual rather than collectivistic means (Batstone et.al.1977:-38).

Teachers accept a high level of responsibility for the planning and controlling of their own work. This is entirely consistent with individualistic ideas of career advancement and promotion. The union plays little or no part in determining the shape of the teaching load of teachers, or in the patterns of promotion which are essentially individualistic. That is to say that advancement within a school depends upon impressing superiors, normally the headteacher or the head of department, rather than on any form of sponsorship by the union, any collective decision or influence exerted by one's fellow workers. This is generally accepted as legitimate by all teachers who are committed to this system of mobility whatever the nature of their attachment to a union. The same is true when it comes to determining the nature of the work to be done. Unions are rarely involved in discussions on the nature of teaching and the content of the curriculum even where such discussions may lead to a radical re-structuring of workplace activities.

The resolution of problems related to such matters is not normally seen as a legitimate domain of the union. Rather it is regarded as a sphere of either individual activity based on the specialist knowledge and experience of the individual, or the province of small groups of teachers united by a professional interest. Unions only become involved in such areas if other forms of grievance arise in the process of making such decisions. Hence the exact point at which the NAS/UWT may act in matters such as recruiting, promotion and teaching activities within schools on behalf of its members is not only extremely limited but it also requires a nicety of judgement if such interventions are to be regarded as legitimate by the members themselves.

In the sense, therefore, that major workplace decisions may be taken which vitally affect the nature of the work, conditions of service and career prospects of members without reference to the union, the 'culture of individualism' is deeply rooted in British schools. These decisions and the resolution of problems related to them are formulated by referring to teachers as individuals rather than as a collectivity. This is accepted as legitimate by teachers who, in these areas at least, have resolved the problem of whether to unite to promote their interests or to try to advance through their own efforts. Such matters are seen as the concern of the individual and not of the union. Criteria, processes and outcomes are determined by the relationship between teachers as individuals, their superiors and, where relevant, LEA officers. Members of the Coventry NAS/UWT do, however, recognise that if such matters as these become the legitimate sphere of union activity, justifications and explanations of any union activity in this area have to be expressed in the language of individualism. There are also areas of activity about which the same might be said for collectivism.

Collectivism. As Batstone shows in his study of strike action, the language of individualism,and the language of collectivism, co-exist in many aspects of union activity. (Batstone, Boraston and Frenkel,1978). This appears to be equally true of the Coventry NAS/UWT where forms of legitimation by reference to the collective interest can be found side by side with justification on the grounds of individualism. The notion of collectivism, or the appeal to trade union principles, can be identified in many of the reasons given by school representatives for holding office and belonging to the NAS/UWT. It can also be seen in the statements about trade unionism made by the president,

treasurer and secretary. Collectivism as articulated within the NAS/UWT shares an emphasis on the protection of the interests of the members, mutual self protection, and a concern for fairness and justice which is found in the definition of trade union principles given by Batstone (Batstone et.al.,1977:II). The analysis of trade union aims, purposes and methods in Chapter 8, indicates how far the possibility exists for extending and developing aspects of collectivism. Within the Coventry NAS/UWT, however, the extent to which this 'elasticity of values' is possible tends to be limited by other elements within the total cluster of values which can be identified within the local association.

The degree of emphasis placed on collectivism may change over time and according to issues. The NAS/UWT interpretation of these principles is not, however, likely to contain demands for worker control of industry, since much of the workplace activity is not regarded as the legitimate domain of the union. It may contain demands for consultation and participation in decisions about structuring of education and processes of, say, pupil evaluation. Similarly there is not likely to be a demand for a socialist society even though the union is affiliated to the Labour Party. The resulting overtly political activity would be regarded as beyond the legitimate sphere of activity of this local association. The Coventry NAS/UWT interpretation of collectivism would, as Brown,(1973), suggests contain a concern for unity amongst members, equity of treatment in areas not excluded by other factors such as appeals to individualism, and the maintenance of good relations with management. In the case of the Coventry NAS/UWT, however, this accommodative aspect of collectivism is, on many occasions, so central to the stance taken on specific issues that it deserves to be considered separately. Nevertheless the existence of both individualistic and

accommodative aspects to the language of legitimation, serve to restrict the extent to which appeals may be made to collective goals. As will be seen the professional element within the total cluster of values which operate within the NAS/UWT has a similar influence.

Accommodation. Discussions of accommodation normally take place within the context of trade union principles and the extent to which these have to be modified in order that unions can cope with the management structure which directly impinges upon them, (Brown,1973; Willman,1980; Batstone et.al.,1978; Batstone et.al.1977). It is suggested that the web of rules and procedures which circumscribe workplace activity, including the very structure of the workplace organizations themselves are such as to reinforce the centrality of management goals and activities (Goodridge,1975). The maintenance of good bargaining relationships with management and the reduction of uncertainty in those relationships, leads to an essentially accommodatory stance by shop stewards (Brown,1973). Batstone,(1977), recognizes that not only does management organize working conditions but it may also, through interactions with shop stewards, support or challenge the position of individual stewards within the workplace, and within the trade union organization itself. The behaviour of management also has a significant effect on union activity since there may be cases, such as when management faces a crisis, that rules and agreements will be broken and procedures short circuited (Batstone,1977). Unions have to decide how to respond to this. Even attempts to disrupt the achievement of management goals depend on the ability to identify those goals. As Batstone et.al.,(1978), point out, this is not always easy since, for example, there may be reasons why management might prefer not to have any production at a particular time. A strike would not then be the significant disruption of management goals that it might be thought to be in such circumstances. In an

environment in which management has an interest in ensuring that rules and procedures are consistently and reliably applied, and where both management and unions have an interest in observing regulatory labour legislation, union goals converge with those of management (Willman,1980). Thus unions do not and cannot exist independently of management. The relationship between them is essentially dependent and accommodative.

This is the case with the Coventry NAS/UWT. Here, however, accommodation, whilst being an integral part of trade unionism in the same way that it is with other unions, does have some significant implications which demand that, in the language of legitimation at least, it is considered as a separate set of ideas and values. Accommodation is closely connected with the moderate stance which the local association attempts to foster in its relationships with management. This involves recognizing that the management, as represented both by LEA officers and by headteachers, shares concerns and problems with reference to the education service which need to be confronted in a spirit of co-operation rather than of conflict. In such cases, and there are many, accommodation presupposes that the best interests of the NAS/UWT and its members can and should be served by working with management. Thus accommodation involves the recognition that management can be central in promoting the interests of the union. It also involves a tacit understanding that the LEA positions on certain matters, such as incompetent teachers, ought to be actively supported even where the teacher concerned is an NAS/UWT member. Clearly this situation could be fraught with difficulties for union officers who appear not to be supporting their own members. The moderate position taken by the local association is a major part of its continuing struggle to ensure that it can retain a viable negotiating position with the LEA in spite of

being a relatively small union. All of this may be true of other unions. Where the NAS/UWT emphasis on accommodation differs from that of other unions, and the reason for treating it as a separate aspect of the language of legitimation, is the extent to which it leads to a set of stances towards other groups within the Coventry NAS/UWT's sphere of activities.

Accommodation for the NAS/UWT in Coventry is not merely a matter for its own relationships with the management. Its attempts to establish and defend a moderate stance lead to situations in which its approach to accommodation influences its relationship with other organizations. The reasons given by the officers in Chapter 6 for withdrawing from the Coventry Trades Council and the Campaign for Educational Advance illustrate this point. The stance of moderation precludes, for this local association, any relationships which might lead to it becoming tainted with militancy or radicalism through its contacts with other groups. This is not to say that it would not, as a union, take up a militant posture on behalf of its members. It is to argue, however, that the importance of accommodation and its related position of moderation are widely recognized within the local association. These same factors can also be found in the way in which the NUT is represented by NAS/UWT officers to executive members, and to the rank-and-file, as a militant organization with which the LEA officers only deal with some reluctance. Whether this is an accurate reflection on the LEA position is irrelevant. What is important is that it is used as a significant argument for legitimating a whole range of actions.

Accommodation and moderation are forced on the Coventry NAS/UWT by its relatively weak bargaining position. It is significantly smaller than the NUT and also has far less resources at its disposal. Whilst it might be able to disrupt some aspects of the education service in Coventry, should the need arise, it is doubtful if such a challenge could be maintained in a long dispute. It is clear that the NAS/UWT could not, alone, mount a realistic and sustained challenge to the LEA. Equally many of those issues which arise as casework can only be resolved from the local association's standpoint, through processes of informal negotiation. The secretary chooses this as the most appropriate form of action whenever this is possible but, in so doing, becomes heavily dependent on the initial responses of the LEA officers being favourable towards such approaches. The secretary's attitude to the election and accreditation of school representatives also indicate how crucial he thinks that accommodation and moderation are. Thus accommodation forms part of the language of legitimation which is used and accepted within the Coventry NAS/UWT. It also has a significant influence on the external relationships of the local association, and on the ways in which the activities of other groups are presented and interpreted within the executive as well as within the local association at large.

Professionalism. It was suggested in Chapter 2 that the concept of 'profession', when used with reference to teachers is generally understood to mean a set of ideas and practices which are seen to be in conflict with collectivism and the principles of trade unionism. This was supported by evidence from the work of Ginsberg et.al.,(1980), and Deem,(1976), who argued that in a variety of contexts teachers said that this was how they interpreted professionalism. As Ginsberg,(1980:180),

pointed out, however, there was a wide diversity of views amongst their respondents over what was actually meant by professionalism and trade unionism. The former was variously taken to mean an opposition to strike action; an organization of higher status than a trade union; an appeal to rational discourse; an ability to control standards of entry; working conditions and relationship with pupils and parents. Many of these characteristics which define professionalism have much in common with the views of craft unions held by their members and, as such, may easily be incorporated into aspects of trade unionism. Lawn and Ozga recognize that the reverse might be true without drawing the obvious conclusion that professionalism can be understood as part of the language of legitimation within a union when they suggest that, 'Elements of industrial unionism... can also be seen as part of professionalism' (Lawn and Ozga,1981:47). Usually, however, claims by teachers to professional status have been seen as a major, partially successful process of moving the occupation away from its working class origins to a position in which it has achieved increased remuneration, high qualifications and some influence on policy making (Tropp,1957). Professionalism, in this context, has been described as, ' a petit bourgeois strategy for advancing and defending a relatively priviledged position' (Finn, Grant and Johnson, 1979:167).

Analyses of this type are based on trait theories of professions which argue that professionalism is to be understood in terms of the procession or acquisition of sets of characteristics. When sufficient relevant characteristics can be identified, then the group has become a profession, (Millerson,1964; Carr Saunders and Wilson,1933), although particular groups might stick at or move through the twilight world of the semi-professional (Etzioni,1969). The concern with these

characteristics leads to an approach which focuses on the question of whether or not teachers are professionals and, therefore, to what extent teachers' organizations are professional organizations , (Gosden,1972). As might be expected, simplistic questions will emerge from simplistic conceptualizations.

A more fruitful approach to professionalism is to see it as an institutional form of control rather than a set of characteristics which are peculiar to a particular occupation,(Johnson,1972). A profession then, is not a set of occupational characteristics but a means of controlling an occupation. In similar vein, Kogan,(1975), and Locke,(1974),argues that one teachers' union, the NUT, tries to exert its professional control over those areas of its activity with which it shares a common interest with the DES and local authorities over educational issues, as opposed to those where differences arise over pay and working conditions. Coates, (1972), like Kogan, sees the strategies which teachers have adopted in pursuit of their educational aims as professional strategies consistently developed over a long period. He recognizes that 'interest group' strategies are not diametrically opposed to 'professional aims', the difference being essentially tactical. Kogan also suggests that 'professional stances' are not entirely compatible with trade unionism when he points out that the 1969 strike indicated that the NUT was as much a trade union as a professional association.

There is considerable evidence, therefore, to support the view that the professional claims made by teachers should not be dismissed as they were by Beatrice Webb, as 'manifestations of a professional egoism in the teacher' (1915:II). Nor should such claims be regarded as simply an indication that teachers as an occupational group conform to a set of criteria which distinguish them from some groups and

makes them similar to others. Claims to professionality are claims to have a series of rights recognized by the members of the occupational group and those with whom they come into contact. These rights concern the extent to which that particular occupational group should have control over entry to the occupational group, standards of conduct and practice within it, the mechanisms for making such judgements, relationships between the practitioner, client and, where relevant, the employer, and the right to speak and act on behalf of that occupational group on professional matters. Such claims must be understood both in terms of actually attempting to establish the control over these spheres of occupational activity, and of challenging the rights of any other body, the DES and LEA in the case of teachers, to have such control. The extent to which such rights are exercised regularly will vary in practice but the claims by any occupational group to exercise them to the exclusion of any other group wishing to do so is of the greatest significance. As has been argued above, claims to exercise such rights are conventionally regarded as differentiating the group making those claims from trade unions and their related principles of collectivism. The rights themselves are seen as the distingushing feature of a profession, in contrast to the collectivist stigma of trade union membership (Ginsberg,1981).

Professionalism in the language of legitimation of the Coventry NAS/UWT contains all the elements outlined above when it was used. Its use is located firmly within the conduct of trade union activity yet it is based upon claims to professional autonomy. Such claims are used to establish and defend spheres of influence from other groups, in particular the LEA and the national union headquarters. When a national officer was unwise enough to make a series of pronouncements on curriculum matters, his right to do so was challenged on professional grounds. Thus professionalism, in this context, is used to define and

protect areas over which members feel they should have control as professionals but within a trade union situation. It is used as part of the language of legitimation within the union to shape action, gain support and legitimize positions, as well as to respond to initiatives which come from outside the local association. Professionalism is not, therefore, the antithesis of trade unionism in this instance. Rather it is an integral part of trade union activity. It features in the ways in which officers present their actions to the executive and the rank-and-file for legitimation as well as in the ways in which the members respond to officers' actions and to outside events. It is one part of the available language of legitimation used in the arena of the Coventry NAS/UWT.

Control and Influence. Individualism, collectivism, accommodation and professionalism form the main elements of the language of legitimation which can be identified in the Coventry local association of the NAS/UWT in those areas which appeared to make up the activities of that association on the basis of this analysis of the work of the executive and its officers. Although these different elements can be separated and identified for the purpose of analysis, this is not to say that they are always used separately or even consistently in the process of argument, explanation and justification which go on in the local association as members continually formulate and re-formulate those shared meanings and expectations which patrol the boundaries of acceptibility and appropriateness, and serve to control and influence the behaviour of both officers and members alike. In some circumstances justifications may contain different elements of the language of legitimation whilst in others one will predominate. Arguments may not always be located consistently in one area. The debate may shift across the boundaries of types of legitimation as agreements are sought and

found. Nevertheless the central aspects of the four main elements in the language of legitimation remain distinct and clear.

This blurring of the boundaries between analytically distinct types of language is not confined to the NAS/UWT. Nor is the co-existence of different kinds of languages of justification. Batstone showed, in his study of strike action and the language used to initiate and defend such action, that the language of individualism and the language of collectivism can be seen to co-exist in many aspects of union activity. The relationship between the two forms of justification is extremely complex (Batstone et.al.,1978). The very derivation of accommodation indicates that its relationship with the broader aspects of trade union principles is far from simplistic. Professionalism, recognized by many as providing the basis for occupational organizations which are thought to be significantly different from trade unions, has much in common with the traditional craft unions and is a significant part of the language used in the NAS/UWT. It may also be found in many other unions whose members seek some form of professional status as part of their attempts to improve their control over work, remuneration and conditions. This incorporation into the language of legitimation of the professional and individualistic elements by unions which may or may not be described as 'white collar', together with the significant part in the legitimation process played by collectivism, challenges, the notion that a different social imagery based on individualism and a 'status ideology' might serve to differentiate between white collar and other unions (see Bain et.al.,1973:1-55 for an outline of this argument).

The membership of the NAS/UWT is segmented and fragmented. So is the membership of, say, NUPE (Fryer et.al.,1974 and Terry,1982). A number of groups within the membership, primary teachers and women teachers for example, demonstrate an awareness of their own special position. To some extent this segmentation presented difficulties for the NAS/UWT in Coventry. These difficulties were recognized and acknowledged in its changing organizational structure which was concerned with creating those structural conditions in which support could be mobilized effectively for the actions of officers and within which legitimations could be provided and accepted. Thus, more subtly, the differentiation within the membership, especially of the executive, meant that acceptance of,and challenges to,the attempts to legitimate action and to provide explanations and justifications needed to take into account the differences, as well as the similarities, between members. For actions to receive legitimation they must be justified on the basis of language which is both acceptable and appropriate for that particular situation bearing in mind the nature of the constituency from which legitimation is being sought. For a challenge to be made successfully in such a situation, it must contain elements of the language of legitimation which appeals more strongly to the relevant constituency than the justifications given. Thus the officers of the Coventry NAS/UWT have a number of leadership stances which they can adopt with reference to issues and to different groups within the local association. Those who feel the need to challenge those officers or other executive members have a similar range of language at their disposal.

It is thus possible to explain differences in the ways in which issues are shaped and actions responded to in terms of the extent to which various languages of legitimation are used. The issue of the headteacher who failed to appoint a replacement member of a mathematics department, outlined in Chapter 7 and referred to in Chapter 8, can be understood in these terms. Although that issue was brought to an executive meeting it was handled by the secretary as one of his cases. It was not elevated into an important issue either by the secretary or by other members of the executive. The intervention, whilst effective, was relatively lukewarm. The executive appeared to feel that the matter was one of internal school organization and, therefore, a professional matter. The secretary agreed. He also felt that it was individualistic in the sense that the internal organization of a department is normally the concern of the head of that department in conjunction with the headteacher. Matters such as recruitment to a department ought, in normal cirucmstances, to be handled between them. The blue asbestos issue on the other hand, was entirely concerned with working conditions and the health and safety of members. Here an intervention in the affairs of the same school was much more solidly based on collectivist trade union principles. This approach was supported by all the executive members even though it brought the local association in direct conflict with the officers of the LEA, who failed to provide the report which they had indicated would be forthcoming. Only the treasurer, who counselled caution in order to give the officers of the LEA time to respond in accordance with his firmly held principles of accommodation, could possibly be regarded as a dissenting voice. In the event, this case revealed how much the NAS/UWT depended on the co-operation of the LEA's officers since the local association had to content itself with verbal assurances.

The predominant language of legitimation operating in the instance of the Coventry NAS/UWT's withdrawal from the CEA was quite different. It revealed how important the accommodation element and its related moderate stance could be in the deliberations and considerations of the local association. Most overtly educational groups would have to give serious consideration to a proposal to withdraw from an organization like the CEA whose object was to further the interests of state education. For the NAS/UWT the initial dispute focused on differences about cuts in educational expenditure. The NUT, NALGO and other organizations represented on the CEA were all opposed to any cuts in local government expenditure. The NAS/UWT at both local and national level took the view that cuts were inevitable and that the role of the teachers' organizations should be to minimize them. This view was very similar to that of the Coventry LEA. Terry Casey, General Secretary of the NAS/UWT put this argument to a public meeting of the CEA in Coventry. The resulting recriminations between the NAS/UWT and other local organizations provided the initial stimulus which resulted in the officers of the NAS/UWT presenting a proposal to withdraw from the CEA. This proposal was justified on the grounds that the CEA was a politically motivated organization which was not concerned with education. The officers argued that there was a danger that the NAS/UWT's moderate stance on many issues could be endangered by association with such groups. Accommodation was too important to the local association to allow this to happen. A very similar situation arose before the NAS/UWT withdrew from the Trades Council, but here the concern was with the radical political views and the extreme collectivism of the majority of the Trades Council.

Perhaps the most interesting example of the uses of the various elements of the language of legitimation was that of the NUPE day of action. When this proposed day of action was first reported to the NAS/UWT executive the debate focused on how best to encourage it. Several executive members criticized the officers for not being sufficiently forthright in their support of the action. NUPE kept the details of their action secret until the very last moment. The result of this was that, for once, the LEA was forced into a reactive rather than a proactive stance since it was not known exactly what form the action was to take. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that NAS/UWT itself was in an uncomfortably reactive position. It was unable to advise members on what to do. Support was still evident within the executive since, in line with trade union principles, there was concern about having to cross picket lines. Support began to evaporate when NUPE was reported to have claimed that only its members had the right to open schools. This was resented by several headteacher members of the NAS/UWT, especially the treasurer, who saw it as a challenge to their professional autonomy. Other members agreed. When the instructions from the LEA came, they did so in the form of a letter to headteachers. The members resented this because it by-passed the local association. The content of the matter aroused even more anger since it instructed teachers to report for a day of in-service training. Members regarded this as both an encroachment on their professional autonomy and an affront to their individualistic orientations, since it was a direct attempt to determine the contact of their work as individuals. The NAS/UWT officers recognized the difficult position that had been created for the LEA by the way in which events had developed. They were all convinced that NUPE had been infiltrated by extremists, a view

which had been reported to an executive meeting. The secretary, therefore, advised his members to comply with the instructions contained in the letters to headteachers. Some did and some did not.

In the days following the day of action it became clear that a significant number of members, both executive and rank-and-file. did not share the view of events held by the NAS/UWT officers. The need to take a moderate stance and accommodate the LEA was subordinated to the anger generated by what was seen as an affront to the professional integrity of teachers who felt that they were not trusted by the LEA to use the day of action in relevant and useful ways. The rank-and-file members in one particular school initiated a challenge to the position taken by the officers. The officers responded. The secretary, whilst arguing that many members had not followed correct procedures through failing to attend meetings, recognized that collectively the members believed that they had a significant grievance. This was represented to the LEA and appropriate action taken.

The officers, especially the secretary, had misjudged the extent to which members would accept legitimation for action based on accommodation. Clearly members were more concerned with professionalism. The officers changed their stance and took appropriate action in the interests of collectivism. Members responded in similar vein by passing a vote of confidence in the secretary. Here then there was an example of a variety of types of legitimation being used to justify particular positions with reference to the same issue. Different elements of the language of legitimation are used to control or influence the actions of other parties to the issue both with reference to the issue itself and afterwards. In this example it is, perhaps not surprising that collectivism, albeit a limited form of collectivism, focused on

preserving the internal integrity of the local association rather than a collectivism rooted in inter-union solidarity, was seen to prevail in the end.

From the examples discussed above it can be seen that the language of legitimation has a central role in enabling officers to provide justifications for actions which they take in response to initiatives from the local authority and in response to issues which are brought to them by members. The language of legitimation also plays a part in challenging such actions and in defining situations in which challenges may be made. It can be seen that legitimation is neither sought nor given only in terms of the traditional trade union values of collectivism. Other sets of values normally regarded as separate from and, at times, in conflict with, these more traditional union principles are incorporated into the language of legitimation. The content of the four elements within the language was clearly recognized by the participants, though it is doubtful if they would have either defined their use of argument in this way or have always recognized the discrete nature of the elements which have been identified here. Nevertheless, officers and members frequently have recourse to such forms of argument. Much of the activity of the Coventry NAS/UWT was challenged and defended, controlled and influenced through interactions carried out in terms of this language of legitimation.

Independence and Dependence

The language of legitimation has been used to justify and explain the stances taken and the challenges made on a wide range of issues within the local association of the Coventry NAS/UWT. The content of the discussions and debates which structure the presentation of these justifications and legitimations, taken in the context of the provisions

made for participation and the nature of trade union activity, operate as mechanisms of control and influence. The language of legitimation is used by officers to control and influence the activities and, more commonly, the responses of members. In the same way the language is used by members to control, influence and challenge the actions of the officers. These interactions, conducted through the language of legitimation, were crucial to the shaping of shared perceptions about the nature of appropriate and acceptable behaviour which informed the actions of those responsible for representing the local association. The activities of the local association as carried out by its representatives, were not only directed internally as the discussion of the executive meetings show. Internal relationships were very significant but the union also had to relate to other organizations in Coventry including other unions. The ways in which the language of legitimation was used to shape many of these external relationships has already been discussed above. Of more significance for the local association, however, is its relationships with the national organization of the NAS/UWT and the local education authority. The question of how far the local association may be seen to be dependent or independent of both its national headquarters and the employer has already been touched upon briefly but the part played by the language of legitimation in defining has not yet been considered.

As was shown in Chapters 6 and 7 , the factors which influence the structure of the relationships between the local association and the regional and national organization largely depends on the activities of the officers in general and the secretary in particular. The secretary was able to act in the capacity of workplace representative in spite of there being elected representatives in the schools. His

position and that of the school representatives themselves are both ambiguous. The secretary acted not only as a workplace representative but as a full time official with significant authority in many instances. He seemed to be able to deal with the regional representative as if he, the secretary, was a relatively powerful workplace representative while, at the same time, acting as the link between his branch and the national organization. Boraston,et.al.(1975), argues that this relationship between the workplace organization and the full time official tends to be either dependent or independent. The Coventry secretary tended to act as full time official towards the schools with the representatives being heavily dependent upon him. His position was reinforced by the union's own regulations and the ambiguities in the role of the school representative. He tended to act towards the national headquarters as well as the regional executive member as if he, the secretary, was a representative of a strong workplace organization. He certainly did far more than Boraston appeared to expect a branch secretary to do on the basis of his research. How did this come about? Boraston et.al.,(1975). suggest that union structure, union size and resources, the scope for workplace bargaining and the trade union experience of stewards and employees, and their general status within the union are all factors in determining the shape of the relationship between the various parts of the union structure. As was argued in Chapter 3, these factors cannot entirely account for the situation within the Coventry NAS/UWT.

The discussions of the work of the secretary and of the activities of the branch show that the local association tended to act relatively independently of national headquarters but that schools were dependent on the local secretary. The latter situation was a result of factors such as the constraints placed upon school representatives

by the union's own rules and by the failure of the training process to prepare representatives for the role that they were expected to play. This was compounded by an extremely active local secretary who worked within a widely recognized and agreed policy of accommodation. The executive's discussion of accreditation revealed that the executive and its officers were worried about school representatives damaging this vital part of the local association's position. Thus the relationship between school and local association is legitimized with reference to one element in the language of legitimation. The elements of individualism and professionalism thus exclude certain types of influence over some areas of activity in schools, whilst recognizing the appropriateness of others. This, in turn, served to weaken the position of the school representative while legitimating the position of the local association's secretary.

The language of legitimation played a similar role in supporting the position taken by the officers of the local association with reference to the national organization. The president and treasurer both state , in Chapter 5, that the Coventry NAS/UWT should concern itself with local issues and that the national organization should be more concerned with facilitating this than with activities external to the NAS/UWT. The executive tended to interpret all issues in local terms including those directives from headquarters on matters of general concern like recruitment. These were only acted upon in the light of local circumstances. The stance initiated by the secretary, and endorsed by the executive, on the proposed recruitment drive wanted by headquarters was legitimized on the grounds of collectivism. It would not have been in the best interests of the local association to challenge another teachers' union over membership at that time in Coventry. The local secretary followed a similar line in his casework. He only contacted the national headquarters if a case was beyond his expertise. At times executive members clearly regarded the actions of the national officers as inappropriate especially

when they strayed into curriculum matters. Such actions were challenged as illegitimate on the basis of the professional element in the language of legitimation. Thus although there are fewer examples of the language of legitimation being used in this way because most of the local association's activities were locally initiated and locally focused, it can be seen that a similar type of legitimation process is at work in the inter-relationships between the various parts of the local and national structure of the NAS/UWT. This aspect of the relationship is missing from Boraston, Clegg and Rimmer's, (1975), analysis since they tend to focus on the structural factors which determine dependence or independence. They do not pay sufficient attention to the ways in which the uses which might be made of those structures are legitimized or challenged.

Whilst Boraston et.al.,(1975), suggest that the main dimensions for examining the relationship between the various parts of the union structure are independence and dependence, it is argued by Willman that the main dimensions along which union and management relationships vary are 'independent' and 'sponsored' (Willman,1980) . These terms appear to be derived from the work of Brown, Ebsworth and Terry,(1978), amongst others. An independent union organization is one which has grown in the face of management opposition whilst a sponsored one has developed under the regime of indirect or direct managerial promotion. Willman,(1980), points out that such a distinction can be overdrawn but only because, 'the complexity of shop steward's roles may cause them to act inconsistently', (Willman:43), or because product or labour market conditions or personnel involved with the shop steward organization may change. Willman goes on to argue that it ought to be possible to distinguish between the two types of organization. He

suggests that it might be expected that sponsored organizations would be hierarchically organized although he can find no evidence to support this view. He then argues that pursuit of union principles will, in the end, prove to be the most significant factor for differentiating between independent and sponsored unions. He argues that management sponsored organizations will pursue 'policies which assist the rationalization of personnel administration' whilst independent organizations will pursue such policies as well as policies designed to 'exert worker influence on the effort bargain' (Willman,1980:45).

Effort bargaining, that is on-the-job resistance to management, may be linked to the vigorous pursuit of off-the-job fringe benefits. For Willman, the significance of management sponsorship of a union organization is that it will effectively restrict the activities of the union to off-the-job fringe benefit concerns. At the same time, the sponsored organization will be heavily involved in labour regulation and rationalization. Brown, (1981), has noted that, since 1968, one of the major changes in workplace industrial relations has been that management now exerts a powerful influence over what was previously a largely independent set of activities in a way that would have been unthinkable in earlier years. He suggests that a weak tradition of trade union activity in many growing unions has allowed this to happen. Drake et.al.,(1980), makes a similar point with reference to the Society of Civil and Public Servants while Fryer,(1974), found that this lack of trade union tradition was a significant factor in the way in which the organization of NUPE had developed.

It has been argued in Chapters 2 and 3 that at both national and local levels the NAS/UWT membership was expanding during the period under discussion, although it is still only the second largest of the

teachers' unions. It has also been suggested in Chapter 4 that a significant proportion of school representatives lack this strong tradition on trade union activity that is thought to be so vital to the establishment of an independent organization. The chapters concerned with the officers demonstrate that one of their main concerns was the apparent inability of the Coventry NAS/UWT to attract and retain a core of younger members who could gain much needed experience in trade union activity and then move on to office holding within the local association. Throughout the whole of this discussion of the NAS/UWT in Coventry, and especially in the chapter on the executive committee, it is clear that the LEA exerts a major influence over the content of the issues to which the local association has to respond and over the timing of responses. Similarly the authority, by its policy on schools, directly structures the nature of the workplace and, in so doing, can either increase or decrease the problems of workplace representation for the Coventry NAS/UWT. For example, if the education authority had not been one of the first in the country to establish large comprehensive schools and then to add a community college system to that, the nature of secondary schooling in Coventry may have been very different. There may, for example, have been a collection of fairly small schools as there were in Warwickshire. The development of a system of representation based on large workplace groups which took place early in 1976, could not then have happened in Coventry. Is the NAS/UWT in Coventry, a sponsored or an independent organization in view of its close dependence on the employing authority in so many ways?

To the extent that the LEA can determine the structure of the workplace, with all the implications of that, and can force the Coventry NAS/UWT into situations in which it is essentially re-active and, therefore, at a disadvantage in negotiations, the Coventry NAS/UWT may be said to be dependent on the employers. This should not be taken to mean that the organization is sponsored by the LEA in the sense that Willman uses the term. Willman is guilty of drawing too sharp a distinction between sponsorship and independence. Although the LEA may determine the nature and timing of many of the issues which are raised and, in part, establish the forum for debate by shaping the nature of the workplace organization, it cannot contain the responses which are made by the local association. Nor has it been particularly successful in preventing discussion of matters which the local association wanted to raise.

A sponsored organization would, it can be argued, use what has been called here accommodation as the main element in its legitimation of its relationship with the employer. This may be disguised in a number of ways. For example, it could be argued that although the interests of members might, in the short run, be best served by striking, their long term interests lay elsewhere, say in accepting a relatively unfavourable settlement of some particular issue. In the Coventry NAS/UWT, it has been argued, accommodation is an important part of the overall language of legitimation. It can be challenged, however, and challenged successfully. This is one reason why its use may be confined to certain areas. It is also clear that the local association-employer relationship is also determined, for the NAS/UWT, by other elements in the legitimation process. The extent to which the local authority can influence the structure, content and assessment of what is taught is

limited by the use of the professional element within the language of legitimation. The LEA's direct influence over career prospects and the ways in which this influence might be exerted is restricted by the element of individualism which operates in this context. It is clear that all the executive members and many school representatives derive their notion of what is usually in the best interests of members from traditional trade union principles of collectivism. Thus the extent to which a union is management sponsored or independent, can be influenced by the ways in which actions of officers have to be justified to other parts of the local organization as well as by the structural relationships between two groups. In the NAS/UWT the language of legitimation appeared to be more significant in determining these relationships than did the structuring of activities. The structuring of relationships, the LEA's ability to determine the nature and timing of issues, the nature of the educational and economic environment and the relevant personnel, all remained the same over this period. These factors, according to Willman,(1980:43), ought to account for shifts in the stances along the sponsored-independent continuum, unless, that is, such shifts can be put down to shop stewards' inconsistencies.

On the basis of the evidence of the Coventry NAS/UWT it seems more likely that the nature of the local association-employer relationship, and the changes in that relationship, can be accounted for in terms of the legitimation process within the local association rather than by the external structural or economic factors, or by the internal changes in personnel suggested by Willman. Where participation in the local branch is such that legitimation and justification are serious activities, this will remain the case even if the actions of officers tends, on the whole, to be legitimated. Such legitimations within the Coventry NAS/UWT

take account of the nature of trade union activity and, especially the problems posed by re-active stances to externally initiated issues and the confidential nature of much of the casework that is carried out by the secretary. Nevertheless, there are notions of appropriateness and acceptability constraining the activities of officers. These notions are vague and imprecise but they can be identified especially when there is conflict over them. They are established as part of the legitimation process which is a more or less continual negotiation of justification carried out between various representatives of different parts of the local association, central amongst whom is the secretary. This process is carried out in the language of legitimation which may be used both to challenge and defend positions and actions. It is in this way and in these terms that the crucial aspects of the local association-employer relationships appear to be established and changed. The reactions of the local authority and the terms in which its representatives legitimate their relationship with the particular teachers' union is beyond the scope of this study but ought to be the subject of further research.

Conclusion

The relationship between the Coventry NAS/UWT and the LEA is characterized, on the part of the local association, by informality, accommodation and, as far as possible, approaches which are non-threatening and conciliatory. These approaches are generally effective in that, more often than not, they produce outcomes which are acceptable to the members of the association. Nevertheless the secretary, who is the officer most involved in these approaches, still has to negotiate legitimation for much that he does although the confidential nature of his casework is generally respected, and its content tends only to surface at executive meetings when some wider issue is involved. The officer group as a whole frequently act as a support and a point of

reference for the secretary for much that he does. He is central to all local activities. His status within Coventry and his local contacts enable him to operate informally, avoiding overt conflict wherever possible.

This is not to suggest that either the secretary or the other officers can act in the name of the local association without reference to executive members or the rank-and-file. The leadership which is provided by the officer group and, within that group, the secretary, is a product of a complex inter-relationship between officers and members. This relationship is issue specific and, therefore, will vary according to the particular issues which surface at any given time. Responses to issues can take the form of a number of different stances according to the nature, content and timing of an issue. The choice of responses has to be justified, directly or indirectly, to the members, especially where members disagree with the actions accried out in their name. Disagreements of this kind are relatively rare, however, since the reactions of the members, like the actions of the officers, are informed by a set of shared perceptions about trade union activity.

These perceptions and the justifications and explanations provided by officers in order to mobilize support for their actions, are negotiated through a language of legitimation. This consists of four distinctive elements which, taken together, become the medium of discourse through which explanations and justifications are offered, accepted or rejected, and through which notions of appropriate behaviour and acceptable responses are defined and shared. Interaction between officers, and between officers and members, about trade union activity is transacted through this language which also has considerable significance for the type and degree of participation in union affairs. Members are

more likely to make use of a variety of formal and informal opportunities to express their views and to bring influence to bear on the activities of officers if those activities are justified in terms which they, the members, find unacceptable.

The four separate elements of the language of legitimation will be used by different groups at various times to justify or challenge actions. One element may be more significant in one particular area than the others. Professionalism is likely to be used more often with reference to issues concerning the curriculum than is, say, collectivism. Accommodation is especially important in legitimating the relationships between the secretary and the LEA while individualism occurs more in casework than anywhere alse. No single element will ever have absolute priority in any area of activity, however, and explanations provided by officers need, in order to be accepted, to be expressed in terms regarded by their audience as appropriate.

The language of legitimation is also used as part of the process through which the external relationships of the local association are negotiated since those relationships have to be supported by its members. The extent to which the Coventry NAS/UWT operates independently of the national headquarters or co-operates with it is mediated through the language and, in a similar way, so is the local association's relationship with the LEA. In the latter case the NAS/UWT has far less scope for structuring this relationship. This is understood within the local association for, as has been argued above, members recognize the re-active nature of much trade union activity. It is impossible, however, for the LEA to determine which explanations or justifications the executive members and the rank-and-file will find acceptable in any

given situation. It is the nature of the legitimation process which, in the final analysis, is most likely to determine the specific responses made by the local association to particular LEA initiated issues. Accommodation will frequently be accepted as a justification for responses to LEA initiatives but as, for example, the NUPE day of action and the record card issues indicate, appeals to other forms of legitimation are made where that is thought to be in the interests of the members and of the local association.

Professionalism, individualism, accommodation and collectivism are combined in different ways over time and with reference to different issues as part of the language of legitimation. The various combinations can be used to explain the differences in the ways in which issues are shaped and responses formulated. It has been argued that, for the Coventry NAS/UWT, the selection of the particular elements with which to justify any given stance, is significant for the processes of influence and control which can be identified within the local association. The officers need the support of the members in order to retain any form of credibility in their relationships with their employer. This support will only be forthcoming if the members generally believe that their officers are acting in acceptable and appropriate ways. The language of legitimation is the most significant vehicle for providing evidence that this is the case. It is also the medium through which legitimation is denied or re-negotiated. This language, therefore, is the predominant mechanism through which control and influence are exercised within the Coventry NAS/UWT.

CHAPTER TEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Much of the research on control and influence in trade unions, especially that which focuses on the extent to which union leaders actually do represent their rank-and-file, has devoted itself to a discussion on the nature of the structural provisions which are made by unions for transferring power and positions of leadership from one individual or group to another. Similarly, at the local level, participation and involvement, that is the extent to which members take part in union affairs at that level and their commitment to their local unions, had tended to be approached through quantitative methods based on counting the proportion of members who attend meetings and who vote in elections. This thesis has argued that a more sophisticated approach to the nature of membership involvement with their local union was required in order to explore the ways in which control and influence actually do operate. This analysis was based on an examination of the nature of trade union activity at local level and the part played by those significant individuals and groups within the local organization in explaining and justifying the course which that activity takes. This, in turn, led to a discussion of the ways in which such explanations and justifications were formulated, transmitted and received, as well as the reactions to the explanations and justifications.

Much of the literature on teachers' professional organizations has not been informed by insights derived from the industrial relations field. It has not explored in any detail the trade union aspects of the activity of these organizations, nor has any work been done on the real activity at local level which goes on in teachers' unions. The second largest of these unions, the NAS/UWT, has largely been ignored in the literature, yet it has a number of interesting characteristics

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Much of the literature on teachers' professional organizations has not been informed by insights derived from the industrial relations field. It has not explored in any detail the trade union aspects of the activity of these organizations, nor has any work been done on the real activity at local level which goes on in teachers' unions. The second largest of these unions, the NAS/UWT, has largely been ignored in the literature, yet it has a number of interesting characteristics

in its own right. At national level the NAS/UWT has a strong collectivist stance and it is a growing organization. At local level it is in competition with more powerful unions, has to negotiate with a stable, competent and well organized employer, and adopts an accomodatory stance in much of its negotiations.

Many of the characteristics to be found within the NAS/UWT at national level attract a particular kind of member. The association has a distinctive character and identity of its own at both local and national level. The local organization, whilst reflecting much of these nationally determined characteristics, has a structure and an approach to union activity which is peculiarly its own. At times this brings the local organization into conflict with national headquarters. The outcomes of such conflict largely depend on the perceptions of those involved and the ways in which they attempt to present their positions to the various constituencies which make up the local organization.

Significant among such constituencies are the school representatives, or so the mythology of teachers' unions generally has it. Organizationally these representatives are, according to the information given to all union members, central to the local union as well as to the national body, since they represent members' views and transmit information to and from the national headquarters. The reality is somewhat different in many instances. The local executive and its officers are of far more significance for an understanding of the nature of influence and control over activity and for developing an understanding of the ways in which influence and control are exerted over the activities of the local association. Central to this understanding is an analysis of attitudes, aspirations and activities of the local association's president, treasurer and secretary. The local secretary emerges as the single most

crucial figure in the local association and the person upon whom the responsibility for controlling most of its activity rests. But he is still subject to a requirement to explain and justify his actions to his executive and to his members.

Control of the activities of the local association and the extent to which those activities can be influenced, shaped and directed by the members, or by anybody else,depends on a number of factors which are related to the content, context, and nature of those activities . The context within which the activities take place includes the traditions and historical background of the Coventry NAS/UWT, the existence of other significant groups within the Coventry educational world, a set of assumptions about the appropriate nature of trade union activity which appear to be shared by the local NAS/UWT members, their executive and officers. Structural arrangements for participation in local union affairs are also a crucial set of factors for enabling control and influence to be exercised in any direction within the local association and so is the nature of the association's activities and the degree to which there exists shared understandings about the problems which those activities create for those involved. All of these factors combine with the nature of explanations and justifications given and received, accepted and rejected, to form a process of control and influence which is transmitted through a language of justification. This language is the vehicle by which control and influence is exerted and through which agreements and disagreements are shaped, conducted and, in most circumstances, resolved. Thus, it is argued, the key factor in developing an understanding of control and influence in unions and of establishing the extent to which officers represent their members and to which members influence officers, is the nature of this language of

legitimation and the ways in which it is used in particular situations.

The justifications for action and the negotiation of legitimation is carried out mainly through discussion at executive meetings although the smaller officers' meetings also play a part in this process. The officers' views can be challenged successfully by executive meetings. Similarly legitimation given by the executive can be over-ridden by the rank-and-file. The nature of trade union activity is such that, for it to be accepted outside the association as well as inside it, requires legitimation by members or by the executive acting on behalf of members. The structuring of participation within the local association is such that both officers and executive can be challenged. Normally, because actions carried out in the name of the local association by those groups tend to fall within the boundaries of acceptibility and appropriateness, such challenges only occur infrequently. Acceptibility and appropriateness are loosely determined by the negotiation of legitimation.

This process is carried out through the language of legitimation which also helps to shape relationships with the employers and the national organization of the NAS/UWT. It is through this process of establishing legitimation that the patterns of control and influence are established and operate within the local association of this union. Control and influence can, therefore, be seen to be a product of the inter-relationship between the nature of union activity, the structuring of opportunities for participation within the local association and the negotiation of justification through the four elements of the language of legitimation. The identification of this inter-relationship and the articulation of the three main features of it, union activity, the structuring of participation, and negotiation of legitimation through

an appropriate language, has important implications for the theory of trade union government, for the nature and direction of future research on trade union government, and for policy and practice in this area.

Implications for the Theory of Trade Union Government

Many of the implications of this study for the theory of trade union government have been discussed in the previous two chapters. These implications fall into four distinct categories. The first is that of participation in union affairs. It is argued here that far too much emphasis has been placed on the formal aspects of participation in unions' affairs as measured by such indices as attendance at branch meetings, participation in elections of officers, and competition for such offices. As a result of this misplaced emphasis, too little attention has been given to informal aspects of participation, to the ways in which members can and do actually exert influence, and the circumstances in which they choose to participate.This choice,for most union members, is issue specific and, even when involvement in union affairs is at its highest level over a particular issue, such participation may not be confined to formal channels of communication.

If the literature on participation in trade unions frequently concerns itself with the easily quantifiable, research on trade unions also exhibits a similar concern with the easily identifiable. It has tended to concentrate either on the formal provisions for the transfer of power between competing groups or on the extent to which elected oligarchies, a product of the formal structuring of trade unions, can or cannot be controlled by the rank-and-file. Control and influence, in this research, has been viewed as a relatively simplistic, undirectional process of employing resources in order to obtain the absolute supremacy of a particular group or set of ideas within the organization, or in its relationship with others, such as the employer. It has been argued here that, at branch level at least, structural arrangements for the

transfer of power are far less significant than the wider formal and informal processes through which control and influence are brought to bear within the organization. Control and influence are, in this context, more appropriately understood as a complex pattern of interactions between officers, executive members and the rank-and-file through which each group seeks to modify the behaviour of others at various times. Such an approach to trade union government implies that the emphasis should be placed on those processes which are significant rather than on the provisions which appear to be made through the formal structuring of trade union government.

This study also suggests that the branch itself is not the peripheral appendage to union affairs that it is sometimes presented as being. In spite of the fragmented and dispersed nature of the membership, the large number of relatively small workplace groups, and the existence of extremely tight national agreements on salaries, the local association is active in a wide range of spheres related to the protection and furthering of members' interests. At the same time the local association, without benefit of a full time local official, is relatively independent of the national headquarters although, at times, it does depend on headquarters for advice and assistance on some matters. When this happens this relationship is more one of co-operation than of dependence, and one in which, more often than not, events are dictated at local rather than at national level.

The local association's relationship with the national headquarters, like many other aspects of its activities, depends on the nature of the leadership within the organization. It has been suggested that trade union leadership can be categorized into a number of different types depending on the extent to which trade union leaders acted as delegates

or representatives and the extent to which their actions were informed by adherence to trade union principles. This study indicates that theories of trade union leadership based on such analyses do not go far enough. The practices of trade union leaders and the methods which they adopt, are not absolutely fixed either by adherence to principles or by preconceptions of their own roles. Leadership activities may be shaped by an ethos, guided by opinions about the purposes of union activity, and influenced by notions of appropriate behaviour but much trade union leadership activity is shaped by the particular issues and changes according to a variety of circumstances including factors such as the perceived attitudes of members and the part played by groups outside the union. Trade union leadership practices, therefore, may be expected to change over time and according to the problem being confronted. Research on trade union government should identify and explore such situations rather than concerning itself with prescriptions about trade union practices.

Implications for Future Research

This study sought to redress the balance in emphasis in the literature on trade union government. This literature has tended to focus on structural arrangements for transferring power within trade unions. For such studies those arrangements became the only index of democratic practice within unions and where certain structural requirements did not appear to be met, the offending trade unions were deemed to be undemocratic, their leadership oligarchic, and the actions of their officers unrepresentative of the members' wishes. It is not intended here to dismiss as irrelevant those studies which have concentrated on such structural arrangements for, clearly, the ways in which leaders are chosen or removed from office may form part

of an analysis of trade union government. This is exactly what a consideration of such structures ought to be, part of a wider analysis. Such an analysis should not concentrate on formal structures to the exclusion of all else. Nor should it take as given the nature of those formal structures since the way in which they actually do work can only be determined by an explanation of such structures functioning over a period of time.

Similarly participation in union affairs by the rank-and-file has tended only to be viewed in terms of the ways in which the members involved themselves in the formal arrangements for the transfer or power, or of the attendance figures at local branch meetings. Again these dimensions should not be ignored where they are relevant to a particular study. Nor should they be the only evidence taken about the extent and nature of participation by members in the affairs of their union. They are open to a variety of interpretations and take no account of the wide range of opportunities which may be available to those members who wish to influence the actions of their trade union officers over specific issues over a period of time. The informal aspects of participation and involvement may, as this study shows, be even more important on some occasions than the formally structured opportunities for influencing union activities.

Many studies of trade union government have adopted methodologies similar to those outlined above (for example, Lipset,1956; Goldstein, 1952). Others have been attracted to interviews with union officials, (Davis,1963), while the possibilities of quantification and multivariate analysis has attracted some to survey questionnaires (Fosh,1981). Yet another group of research workers has concentrated on the analysis of trade union documents such as constitutions, conference reports and procedures for electing union officials (Edelstein and Warner,1976).

These approaches, while each having individual merits, all tend to be static and, therefore, not to give a picture of the changing dynamics of trade union activity. It is the ways in which this activity changes in emphasis and content as new issues arise that provide the impetus for members to move from relative inactivity to participation in a more active sense at different times throughout their membership of their unions.

There are methodological and conceptual implications here for future research as well as implications for the selection of content for such research. For them to have any extensive validity, the findings of this study require confirmation from other studies of a similar kind. These might focus initially on other local associations of the NAS/UWT or on those of other teachers' unions. More generally, however, the branch level activity of all unions is worthy of more detailed and systematic consideration. This should concentrate on what actually takes place in that sphere of union activity and on the nature of those activities as they are perceived by the participants rather than be concerned with prescriptions for policy or practice which are derived from a preconceived theoretical or ideological position.

The methodology for studies such as these needs to be firmly rooted in an appreciation of the nature of trade union activity, of the internal or external constraints on that activity, and of the complex relationships between officers and members and between union officials and employers' representatives. This requires that observation is the central method used since, only by observation can the research worker hope to gain any insight into the events which take place, the processes through which these events are defined and shaped, and the

perceptions of those events which participants have. Observation, in this sense, not only involves the systematic watching and recording of events but it also includes carrying out informal interviews as well as consistently noting the contacts between people and the ways in which such contacts are interpreted by those involved. Attempts to use such observations will have the effect of shifting the study of trade union activity away from a concern with formal processes and towards a study of activities as and when they occur.

Such approaches would require a more sophisticated approach to key concepts like participation, control and influence as well as to recognize the inter-dependence of union and management organizations and the implications of this for union activity. The degree to which unions are placed in a position of have to react to management initiatives, on management's terms with resources provided and controlled, in part, by employers, has already been discussed at length. Research into trade union activity, nevertheless, needs to show that the implications of these relationships have been understood and now inform current thinking in this area and has been incorporated into research practices.

In the same way the concept of participation, as it is used in research on trade union activity, should be extensively redefined so that it includes more than office holding, voting in elections and attendance at meetings. At its widest, it might include informal contacts between union members and the times when they talk or read about their union. More importantly, however, the reconceptualization of this concept needs to take into account those processes through which officers provide justifications and explanations for their actions to their members. In this particular study, the local executive committee was the main arena for this process. In other unions such might not be the case. The publications of the union at local or

regional level, the use made of the media by officers and the range of informal contacts between all those people who combine to make up the union, as well as the particular responses of the rank-and-file and, where relevant, intermediate levels of the union organization, to the legitimations for action with which they have been provided, may all need in some way to be part of the conceptualization of participation in trade union affairs.

Similarly control and influence have tended, with a few exceptions (Batstone, 1977), to be used in a rather restricted way in most of the literature on trade unions. Their use has often been confined to those activities which are closely associated with those structural arrangements for the transfer of power which have been discussed above. Again too much emphasis has been placed on the form aspects of authority vested in office holders by constitutions and office holding itself. By its very nature, the exercise of power, control and influence, where the latter is even considered, has generally been regarded as a one way process through which leaders lead their rank-and-file. By looking at the ways in which those issues which make up the actual content of union activity are shaped, control and influence can be seen to emerge as more complex processes. Issues are identified and defined, decision are taken, actions challenged or legitimated, behaviour is charged and modified and all of these activities are informed by a general ethos which has been created, and which is sustained by the union and its members.

Such an analysis suggests that the freedom of trade union officers to act is circumscribed by a general ethos where it contains indications of the interests of member. Their ability to obtain legitimation for their actions is subject to the influence of the member but that members only chose to exert such influence over specific issues. Legitimation, and with it control, is not an absolute

attribute of officers nor are they immune from the influence of their members. By concentrating on how issues are shaped, how officers and members respond to them, and how those responses are explained and legitimated within the union might, in time, facilitate the development of concepts upon which research into trade union activity might more appropriately be based.

At that time it should be possible to base statements about trade union practices on a wide range of relevant evidence. It should also be possible to conduct policy making on trade union government on a thorough understanding of the nature of those activities to which such policies address themselves rather than, as at present, formulating policies on what are, at best, misunderstandings about the nature of trade union activities and, at worst, a series of myths and legends about the ways in which trade unions conduct their affairs and about the nature of the problems which confront them. The existence of such myths and legends owes as much to the confusions and ambiguities which can be found within the trade union movement about its own behaviour as it does to the sttempts of others to impose unfavourable interpretations on the existing knowledge about trade union practices. The role of future research should be to explain the confusions, make clear the ambiguities and to illuminate the darkness which often descends over the general subject of trade union activity and the more specific topic of trade union government. This might enable policy to be more informal and more appropriate for trade union affairs as they, in fact, are conducted.

Implication for Policy and Practice

Many of the confusions and ambiguities which this study has highlighted in the existing literature on trade union government, can be found in recent attempts at policy-making in this area. These policies,

and trade union attempts to defend existing practices, have often been based on a concern with formal structure to the exclusion of most other factors. Formal participation has been closely associated with the democratic control exerted by the followers over the leaders in this policy-making and, therefore, policy makers have been guilty of confusing means with ends. Secret ballots, competition for office, and organized opposition, may be the very stuff of pluralist political processes but policies which seek to impose them on to a trade union structure which has to respond to a variety of different circumstances ignore the fact that there is no single right structure for achieving the desired end of a responsive organization which seeks to protect and promote the interests of its members.

Policy-making has to recognize that a variety of formal structures may produce similar outcomes. At the same time, policies have to take into account that frequently there exists a disparity between the formal structure and actual practice. Those who may be expected to have influence by virtue of their formal positions may, in fact, be less influential than others located elsewhere in the organization. Similarly, the descriptions of formal structures sometimes do not illustrate the extent to which there is a gap between the way in which trade unions may be thought to conduct their affairs and the ways which, in fact, those affairs are actually conducted. Policy-making about trade union government, therefore, should not simply be based on assumptions about the effect which may be produced by specific formal structures over a range of situations. It should, rather, be informed by a sound analysis of those processes and practices which actually do take place in trade unions over a period of time and in response to a variety of issues.

These processes and practices which make up trade union activity do not take place in isolation. This study shows clearly that one of the most significant factors in determining the nature of trade union activities, the issues to which trade unions have to respond, and the methods adopted for responding to those issues, is the behaviour of the employer. The employer determines the structure and distribution of the workforce and, therefore, the distribution and organization of the trade union membership. Similarly, the actions of the employer tend to shape the issues to which trade unions have to respond while, at the same time, determining the likely nature of those responses. This complex relationship between trade unions and employers is rarely, if ever, acknowledged in policy-making about trade union government.

This re-active characteristic of much trade union activity and the central part played in that activity by employers, as well as other outside agencies such as other unions, has significant implications for trade union practice. If trade unions are regularly placed in situations where they have to respond to the activities of employers and where those responses are to any great extent determined by the employers, then trade union structures and practices need to take into account this relationship. If certain negotiating procedures are available to a particular union, while other types of procedures are not available because of the structure of the employer's organization or the way in which the workforce has been organized, for example, this has to be reflected in practice at least to the extent that three key factors are recognized. The first is the degree to which the issues over which negotiation takes place are determined by employers in terms of their content, timing and time available for the resolution of those issues. The second is the extent to which the actual pattern

and processes of negotiation are determined by the employers who may allow, say, informal approaches over some issues but not over others. The third concerns the resources available for negotiation. This frequently means information as well as time and access to certain representatives of the employers with the authority to take decisions on the matter in question.

Such access and the necessary information, as well as sufficient time to carry out negotiations, can, in many circumstances, be denied to trade union officers by employers if they so wish. Trade union practices have to recognize this and be so organized that they are flexible and responsive in such situations. This may mean creating structures which can, for example, enable trade union officers to collect and evaluate relevant information before it is needed. It may also require that officers report on their actions to members in a formal and/or informal way at regular intervals and that participation is organized in such a way within the union so as to provide frequent opportunities for the members to receive reports of actions carried out in their name in a direct or an indirect way. These actions can then more easily be regarded as the legitimate actions of that union since they can be seen to have the support of members.

Relationships with employers are crucial to any trade union and its practices. The support of the members for action is, similarly, equally crucial. The importance of the union-employer relationship provides a reminder that much union activity is externally focused in that it has to deal with situations which arise outside the compass of the trade union's own immediate organization. As a result, such situations cannot easily be handled according to terms and conditions dictated by the union. Thus the existence of certain organization

characteristics like cumbersome, monolithic internal decision-making processes based on the right of every member to vote on every issue before any action is contemplated, could seriously inhibit the development of good industrial practices and procedures in union-employer relationships. At the same time, however, trade union organization must provide regular opportunities of an appopriate kind for members to express views about actions carried out in their name. Its practices must also be based on sets of shared interests and on a common perception about the nature of members' interests and how those interests might best be served. The interests of members, as perceived by those members, must be seen to be paramount in what the union does if the officers are to retain the confidence of the members. It is this need to retain confidence of the members as well as the recognition that trade union activity does not take place in isolation that has to inform both policy and practice in trade union affairs.

APPENDIX A

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLMASTERS/UNION OF WOMEN TEACHERS

SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How long have you been a member of the NAS/UWT?

2. How long have you been a school representative?

3. Have you held any other official position in the NAS/UWT?

   If no pass to question 6

4. If Yes : what position and for how long?

5. If you are not now holding any of these offices, why did you leave?

6. Why did you become a school representative?

7. Roughly how many hours a week do you spend on your activities as school representative?

8. What are the most important tasks you have to perform as a school representative?

9. How often are general meetings held in your local association of the NAS/UWT?

10. How often do you attend general meetings?

10.a. When you attend general meetings, what would you say was the most important reason for your attending? (Please tick)

To obtain information on salary negotiations, or other policy questions	☐
To learn more about current educational ideas	☐
To hear a visiting speaker	☐
Because of personal interest in the subject being discussed	☐
To take part in discussion or debate	☐
Other reasons (please specify)	☐

10.b. What would you say was the <u>most important reason</u> for your NOT attending branch meetings?

Other commitments ☐

Inconvenience of time and/or place of meeting ☐

Lack of interest - meetings boring or irrelevant ☐

Confidence that officers and leaders will take right decisions ☐

Dislike of meetings ☐

Other reasons (please specify) ☐

11. Do you ever discuss NAS/UWT matters with:

Members of Executive — Yes ☐ No ☐

How often?
- Once a week ☐
- Once a month ☐
- Before or after branch meetings ☐
- Once or twice a year ☐

Fellow NAS/UWT members in your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

How often?
- Once a week ☐
- Once a month ☐
- Before or after branch meetings ☐
- Once or twice a year ☐

Non-members in your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

How often?
- Once a week ☐
- Once a month ☐
- Before or after branch meetings ☐
- Once or twice a year ☐

Branch Secretary — Yes ☐ No ☐

How often?
- Once a week ☐
- Once a month ☐
- Before or after branch meetings ☐
- Once or twice a year ☐

11. cont.

Others (please specify)	Yes	No
How often?	Once a week	
	Once a month	
	Before or after branch meetings	
	Once or twice a year	

12. How often do you read the Association's Journal "Schoolmaster and Career Teacher"

Every issue	
About one issue in two	
An occasional issue	
Very rarely or never	

13. How often do you read the Coventry Association's Bulletin

Every issue	
About one issue in two	
An occasional issue	
Very rarely or never	

14. Here are some reasons for belongting to a teachers' organisation. Please rank them in order, from 1 to 6, by placing 1 in the box against the statement which you consider to be the most important reason for the majority of teachers whom you know, 2 in the box against the one which you consider to be the next most important, and so on up to 6.

Get cheap insurance, mortgages, etc.	
Because their colleagues are members	
In order to obtain better salaries and conditions	
In order to further educational objectives	
In order to maintain professional standards	
In order to get legal protection	
Other reasons (please specify)	

15. Using the same procedure as for Q. 17 rank the following reasons as they apply to yourself.

I belong to an association in order to get legal protection	☐
I belong to an association in order to get cheap insurance, mortgages, etc.	☐
I belong to an association because my colleagues are members	☐
I belong to an association in order to obtain better salaries and conditions	☐
I belong to an association in order to further educational objectives	☐
I belong to an association in order to further educational standards	☐
Other reasons (please specify)	☐

16. Why did you join this union rather than any others?

17. How important is it that you belong to this union rather than any other?

Very important	☐
Fairly important	☐
Not very important	☐

Thank you for your co-operation.

If you are unable to complete this questionnaire today please return it to me at the address below as soon as possible.

L A Bell
Education Department
University of Warwick
Westwood
COVENTRY
CV4 7AL

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE SURVEY OF SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES

TABLE 1

LENGTH OF NAS/UWT MEMBERSHIP

Years	Primary	Secondary	Total %
0-2	17	17	17
3-8	-	25	17
9-19	50	33	39
20-30	33	25	27
Number in sample	12	12	24

Source: Responses to Questionnaire (Appendix A) given to those School Representatives who attended the two training courses discussed in Chapter 4.

TABLE 2

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS A SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE

Years	Primary	Secondary	Total %
0-2	50	42	44
3-8	33	33	33
9-19	17	17	17
20-30	-	8	6
Number in Sample	12	12	24

Source: As for Table 1.

TABLE 3

RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION WHICH ASKED SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES TO GIVE THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON WHY THE MAJORITY OF TEACHERS THAT THEY KNEW IN A UNION HAS JOINED A UNION

Reason	Primary	Secondary	Total %
Legal Protection	84	66	71
Salary Negotiations	12	17	17
Maintenance of Professional Standards	-	17	12
Total Number in Sample	12	12	24

Source: As for Table 1.

TABLE 4

THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON WHY YOU JOINED A UNION

Reason	Primary	Secondary	Total %
Legal Protection	50	25	33
Salary Negotiations	33	42	39
Professional Standards	17	8	11
Mortgages/insurance	-	8	6
Other (Belief in TUs)	-	17	11
Numbers	12	12	24

Source: As for Table 1.

TABLE 5

YOUR REASONS FOR JOINING THE NAS/UWT RATHER THAN ANY OTHER UNION

Reason	Primary	Secondary	Total %
Career Teacher Policy	36	25	33
Concern for Members	14	8	10
Concern for Education Standards	14	8	10
Quality of Service to Member *	14	25	20
Opposition to other unions	22	32	26
Total Number of Responses **	14	16	30

* This tended to be expressed in terms of the local service rather than the National one which was reflected in the Career Teacher Policy.

** Several people gave more than one reason.

APPENDIX C

DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF THE COVENTRY ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLTEACHERS

1. Name

This Association shall be called the "Coventry Association of Schoolteachers."

2. Objects

The objects of the Association shall be those of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers.

3. Membership

The conditions of membership shall be those of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers.

4. Officers

The Officers of the Association shall be:-

President	Treasurer
Vice-President	Assistant Secretaries (three)
Ex-President	Recruitment Secretary
Secretary	Membership Secretary

Vice-President. The Vice-President shall automatically become President the year after he has served as Vice-President and shall become Ex-President in the succeeding year.

The Vice-President shall be the Chairman of the Education Sub-Committee.

Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be responsible for such sums of money as may from time to time be paid into the Association.

The funds of the Association shall be kept in a bank account opened in the name of the Association.

All cheques paid out in the name of the Association shall be signed by the Treasurer and by either the President or the Secretary of the Association.

The Treasurer shall be the Secretary of the Benevolent Fund.

5. Auditors

Two Auditors shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Association to audit the accounts of the Association for the financial year which shall be the calender year.

6. Executive Committee

(a) The Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers and sixteen (16) elected members plus those appointed under Rule 6(b). At least eight (8) of the elected members shall not be serving in schools included in 6(b).

(b) In all schools which have ten(10) or more members, the members of the school shall have the right to nominate one member of the Executive Committee from their membership.

(c) Fourteen (14) members shall constitute a quorum.

(d) The Executive Committee shall control the affairs of the Association subject to ratification at a general meeting.

(e) The Executive Committee shall have the power to create such sub-committees as shall be deemed necessary.

(f) The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt additional members. The Executive Committee shall use its power of co-option to ensure that there will always be a minimum of six(6) members of each sex serving on the Executive Committee.

7. Election of Officers and Executive Committee

(a) The Officers, except the President and the Ex-President, and the Executive Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting.

(b) Notice of requests for nominations shall be sent out by the Secretary to members at least 28 days before the date of the Annual General Meeting. Nomination forms shall be signed by two members as proposer and seconder respectively and by the nominee, and they must be returned to the Secretary or other Returning Officer at least fourteen (14) days before the commencement of the Annual General Meeting.

(c) Where an election occurs, all ballot papers must be handed to the retiring President before the commencement of the Annual General Meeting.

(d) Any vacancy which arises during the year shall be filled by the Executive Committee and ratified at the next General Meeting.

(e) The Executive Committee shall appoint scrutineers, who shall not be candidates, before the Annual General Meeting.

8. Standing Committees

The following Standing Committees shall be elected every year at the Executive Committee meeting immediately after the Annual

General Meeting:-

(a) Legal Aid - President, Secretary, Treasurer
(b) Benevolent - President, Secretary, Treasurer
(c) Education
(d) Social
(e) Recruitment.

In an emergency, the Officers shall constitute a special ad hoc committee.

9. General Meetings

(a) A General Meeting shall be held at least once a term.

(b) Members shall receive seven (7) clear days' notice of each general meeting, together with a copy of the agenda.

(c) Any member who wishes to have an item placed on the agenda must give it in writing to the Secretary in advance.

(d) Items of current urgency can be placed on the agenda at the discretion of the meeting by a simple majority of those present immediately after the reading of the minutes.

(e) Items introduced under "Any Other Business" can be accepted only at the Chairman's discretion and should be confined to non-controversial matters.

10. Executive Committee Meetings

(a) The Executive Committee shall meet at least ten (10) times a year.

(b) Any member of the Executive Committee who fails to be present at three consecutive meetings, without having notified the Secretary, shall be deemed to have resigned.

11. Annual General Meeting

(a) The Annual General Meeting shall be held in the February of each year, when the Officers and the Executive Committee shall be elected and the Annual Report and the Financial Statement shall be presented for adoption.

(b) Members of the Association shall receive twenty eight (28) days notice of the Annual General Meeting.

(c) Notice of all motions for inclusion in the agenda must reach the Secretary at least fourteen (14) days before the date of the meeting.

12. Extraordinary Meetings

(a) An Extraordinary Meeting may be convened by the Secretary with the sanction of the President.

(b) An Extraordinary Meeting must be convened within twenty one (21) days of a written requisition to do so being received by the Secretary. Such written requisition must be signed by a minimum of twenty five (25) members from at least three schools.

13. Voting

Voting shall be by a show of hands at any meeting, but a ballot may be taken if so desired by a majority of those present. The Chairman shall have a casting vote.

14. Conference

This Association shall be represented at the Annual General Conference of the National Assocation of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers.

15. Federation

(a) This Association shall be normally represented at meetings of the Midland Federation of which it shall be a member by affiliation.

(b) Three delegates shall be sent to Federation meetings.

(c) The affiliation fee payable to the Midland Federation shall be determined by the Federation.

16. The Constitution

(a) Each member shall be presented with a copy of this Constitution when he or she joins the Association.

(b) Membership of the Association shall imply acceptance of this Constitution.

(c) Any alteration of this Constitution may be effected at the Annual General Meeting or at a General Meeting specially convened for that purpose and at no other time.

APPENDIX D

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS

TABLE 1

SIGNIFICANT MEMBERS OF THE COVENTRY NAS/UWT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Key for all Tables in this Chapter		
Name	Office	Initial
Mr K Batch	Elected member, school representative	B
Mr E Chaudley	Local association secretary	S
Mr D Davis	Officer and elected member	D
Mr D Davies	Midland Area National Executive member	EM
Mr M Gales	Elected member	
Mrs P Hopkinson	Elected member, school representative	H
Mr A Hopkinson	President	P
Mr P Kitman	Elected member, school representative	K
Mr A Locke	Officer and Midland Federation, Treasurer	L
Mrs M Peat	Elected member	P
Mr P Peat	Elected member	PP
Mr D Phillips	Elected member, school representative	DP
Mr K Robinson	Treasurer	TR
Miss P Travis	Vice-President, President Elect	T
Mr R Williams	Officer, Past President	RP
Mrs B Webb	Officer, Minutes Secretary	W

TABLE 2

A TYPICAL AGENDA

COVENTRY ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLTEACHERS (NAS/UWT)

EXECUTIVE MEETING — ELM BANK, JULY 5th 1977 at 5pm

AGENDA

* 1. Apologies

* 2. Standing Orders

* 3. Minutes of last two Executive meetings

* 4. Matters Arising

* 5. Correspondence

* 6. Reports

i) CJC
ii) Schools Sub-Committee
iii) Midland Federation
iv) Education Sub-Committee - Mr Williams
v) Any Other Reports

7. Disciplinary Procedure

8. Burnham Report Questionnaire

9. Standing Orders Committee

10. School Representatives Courses

* 11. Any other business

---

* The 7 basic items which appear on every agenda.

Source: NAS/UWT Minute Book, 5th July 1977.

TABLE 3

ITEMS APPEARING ON THE AGENDA AFTER ITEM SIX AND BEFORE AOB

Date of meeting	List of items	Speaker
June	i Midland Federation	S
	ii Secondary School Suspensions	S
	iii Trades Council	RP
	iv School Representatives	S
	v College of Education Representatives	S
	vi Immigrants in Schools	S
July	i Establishment of Local NAS Education Sub-Committee	S
	ii Work Experience Courses	RP
	iii Class sizes	S
	iv School Representatives Coures	S*
October	i Training of School Representatives	S
	ii Staffing of Schools	
	iii Midland Federation	S
	iv Trades Council	D
	v Work Experience Courses	RP
November	i *NUPE Action*	S
	ii Visit of General Secretary	S
	iii Annual Conference Delegates	S
	iv Work Experience Course	RP/S
December	i *NUPE Action*	S
	ii Police Action in Schools*	S
	iii Affiliation to Trades Council	D
	iv Affiliation to Campaign for Educational Advancement	P/S
January	i Representation on the Coventry Joint Consultative Committee (CJC)	S
	ii Midland Federation	P
	iii School Representatives Course	H

TABLE 3

ITEMS APPEARING ON THE AGENDA AFTER ITEM SIX AND BEFORE AOB

Date of meeting	List of items	Speaker
June	i Midland Federation	S
	ii Secondary School Suspensions	S
	iii Trades Council	RP
	iv School Representatives	S
	v College of Education Representatives	S
	vi Immigrants in Schools	S
July	i Establishment of Local NAS Education Sub-Committee	S
	ii Work Experience Courses	RP
	iii Class sizes	S
	iv School Representatives Coures	S*
October	i Training of School Representatives	S
	ii Staffing of Schools	
	iii Midland Federation	S
	iv Trades Council	D
	v Work Experience Courses	RP
November	i *NUPE Action*	S
	ii Visit of General Secretary	S
	iii Annual Conference Delegates	S
	iv Work Experience Course	RP/S
December	i *NUPE Action*	S
	ii Police Action in Schools*	S
	iii Affiliation to Trades Council	D
	iv Affiliation to Campaign for Educational Advancement	P/S
January	i Representation on the Coventry Joint Consultative Committee (CJC)	S
	ii Midland Federation	P
	iii School Representatives Course	H

TABLE 3 (continued)

February	i Representation on the West Midlands Examinations Board	D
	ii Nominations for Officers and Executive members	H
March	i NUPE Action	S
	ii College of Education Interim Teacher Training Committee Representation	S
	iii Representation on Coventry LEA Education Sub-Committee	S
	iv Assaults on Teachers	S
	v West Midland Federation	L
	vi West Midland Exam Board	P
April	i College of Education Interim Committee Representation	S
	ii School Representatives Training Course Recruitment	H
May	i College of Education Interim Committee	S
	ii Representation on the Schools Council Curriculum Committee	P
	iii Midland Federation	P/RP
	iv CJC Representation	P
	v Staffing of Schools	S
	vi Recruitment *	S
	vii Expenses	R
June	i Recruitment	H/E
	ii School Representatives	H
	iii Meeting with in-coming Conservative Group on LEA	S
	iv Report on a legal case involving a teacher	S
	v Report on National Executive Member *	EM
July	i School Representatives Course	TS
	ii Establishing a Standing Orders Committee	T
	iii Disciplinary Procedures	S

* Examples of items moved forward on the agenda.

Source: NAS/UWT, 1976:f to j
NAS/UWT, 1977 h to n, p

TABLE 4

ITEMS LISTED UNDER CORRESPONDENCE

Meeting	Items
June	i *Letter from HQ requesting support for petition on pensions ii *Green Bulletin iii Pamphlet from DES on Probationary Teachers iv From W Midlands Exam Board requesting nomination from NAS/UWT v s From HQ on students leaving college vi From National President on a Social Event vii From Trades Council on public spending cuts
July	i s Letter from HQ on pension ii Request for nomination for Educational Technology Advisory Committee iii *Green Bulletin iv s Letter on Recruitment from National President v Report from LEA/DES on declining pupil population vi Request for nominations for West Midlands Examination Board
October	i *Letter from HQ on School Representative Accreditation Candidates ii From HQ on NAS/UWT voting at TUC Congress iii From LEA on local economy iv *Green Bulletin
November	i *Green Bulletin ii From HQ on Bildington Agreement iii *From HQ on National Secretaries visit to CEA meeting in Coventry iv From Director of Education agreeing to meet National Secretary v From DES refusing to meet teacher organisations to discuss college merger
December	i From NAS members at Alderman Callow School querying the circulation of all teaching and advisory posts ii From Leeds and London Association requesting support for name change iii s From Sandwell Association requesting support for name change

TABLE 4 (continued)

December continued	iv From Midland Education on election of Treasurer v From National Treasurer on increments and percentage pay raises
January	i *From Mr Durnley (LEA) on planning why LEA required information on numbers of pupils from immigrant families ii From Director of Education on recruitment of graduate teachers iii From Huddersfield Association asking for support for a motion at Conference iv Confirmation from a hotel of room reservation for conference delegates v s From HQ on pensions vi *From HQ on job release scheme vii *Green Bulletin viii From Director of Education on NUPE action ix Letter from Coventry City Secretary on Silver Jubilee Appeal x s Letter from LEA on college merger xi From Coventry Citizens Advice Bureau asking for donation
February	i From the Joint Four (another teachers' union) ii From Silver Jubilee Committee iii *Green Bulletin iv Schools Council Subject Committee v From HQ on a conference motion vi s From NUPE vii From HQ on in-service training
March	i From NAS/UWT General Secretary instructing local secretaries to write to Directors of Education inviting them to annual conference ii *Advertisement for a conference on alcholism iii Information on Trade Union Studies iv *Advertisement for lecture by TUC general secretary organized by the Coventry Methodist Churches v From Nottingham Association requesting support for candidates vi From Director of Education on Pupil's Personal Profiles vii *From HQ on school meals supervision viiis From HQ on early retirement ix s From HQ on Health and Safety at work act

TABLE 4 (continued)

April	i From DES on retraining of teachers ii From HQ requesting financial statements from local treasurers iii From Women's Advisory Committee iv *From HQ results of Vice-Presidential election v Birmingham Association News Letter vi Letter of resignation
May	i From Lady Mayoress ii From Silver Jubilee Committee iii From LEA on primary school teachers' redeployment iv From HQ on Examining Board Membership v *Green Bulletin vi *Pamphlet on Health and Safety at Work Act vii s Recruitment Literature viii From Solihull Association requesting support for candidate
June	i Green Bulletin ii *From HQ on Teaching of Science to less able children iii *From Joint Matriculation Examinations Board iv From HQ on Teacher Training v From DES on in-service training vi s From HQ on new enrollment form for students vii From Womens' Advisory Committee viii From Birmingham Association requesting support for a candidate ix Request for financial support from Cheltenham Homes x From LEA requesting members for Residential and Special Schools sub-committee
July	i From HQ on changes since implementation of Houghton Award ii *TUC Code of Practice on Discipline iii From London Association asking for support for a candidate iv s From HQ General Secretary outlining conditions for early retirement v s From HQ on recruitment vi HQ press release on Annen Committee on Broadcasting vii Letter from teacher thanking NAS for support in recent case

Source: As for Table 3. * Put in Bulletin s Sent to a sub-committee

TABLE 5

ITEMS LISTED UNDER MATTERS ARISING

Meeting	Items	Speaker
June	i NAS Representation on Burnham Committee ii Timing of the National Conference	S
July	None	
October	Industrial Training for School Representatives	H
November	Responses to requests for Rednell Conference from members, via Bulletin attendance	P
December	Regulations concerning the operation of a school mini-bus	H
January	i Mini-bus regulations ii Police Action in Schools iii NUPE Action iv Advertising Policy of LEA for Advisory Posts	H S S S
February	None	
March	i Motions for Conference ii Damage to cars parked outside schools iii Examination Board Representation	D H P
April	None	
May	None	
June	None	

TABLE 5 (continued)

July	i CJC Representation ii Agreements about holidays	RP RP

Source: As for Table 3.

TABLE 6

ITEMS APPEARING AS ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Meeting	Items	
June	i Work Experience Courses ii Purchase of a medallion	RP S
July	i Retiring Members of Executive ii Timing of distribution of salaries by LEA	S DP
October	None	
November	i Conference Motions ii CJC Representation iii Regulations concerning school mini-buses	S S H
December	Vote of thanks to Trades Council Delegates	S
January	None	
February	Position of teachers who had not reported for work in the previous December 1st	H
March	i Erosion of teachers' salaries ii School Representatives Course iii Request for copies of Constitution for new members iv First Aid Course	RP P H P
April	i Distribution of School Representatives accreditation cards ii Rumoured change in status of a local school	H G
May	i Conference Timetabling ii Conference Reports	P B

TABLE 6 (continued)

May Continued	iii Criticism of National Executive for its incursion into school curriculum matters	D
June	i Representation on the West Midlands Examinations Board	P
	ii Blue Asphestos in Schools	RP
July	i Police Action in Schools	RP
	ii Erosion of salaries by TUC action in agreeing to % pay rises	RP
	iii Expression on local association attitudde towards the events at Grunwick	K
	iv Arrangements for social event with NAS Officers from Birmingham	S

Source: As for Table 3.

TABLE 7

ITEMS LISTED UNDER REPORTS

Meeting	Items	Speaker
June	i College Merger	S
	ii Consultative Joint Committee(CJC)	S
	iii *Campaign for Educational Advancement (CEA)	S
	iv Midland Federation	S
	v Trades Council	P
	vi Executive Member's Report*	EM
July	i College Merger	S
	ii CEA	S
	iii Recruitment	MP
	iv Trades Council	S
	v Education Committee of the LEA	S
	vi Officers' Meeting	P
	vii Coventry NAS Education Sub-committee	S
	viii CJC	S
October	i Treasurers' Report	TR
	ii Officers' Meeting	P
	iii College Merger	S
	iv Conditions of Service Sub-Committee	H
	v Nation Executive Members' Report	EM
	vi LEA Schools' Sub-committee	S
	vii CJC	S
	viii Midland Federation	S
	ix CEA	S
	x Trades' Council	D
November	i CJC	TR
	ii LEA Schools' Sub-committee	S
	iii College Merger	
	iv Conditions of Service Sub-committee	W
	v Trades' Council	D
	vi Lyng Hall School Representative	H
	vii West Midlands Examination Council	P
	viii National Executive Members' Report	EM

TABLE 7 (continued)

December	i Education Committee (LEA)	S
	ii CJC	P
	iii Midland Federation	S
	iv Officers' Meeting	P
	v Trades' Council	D
January	i Education Committee (LEA)	S
	ii Midland Federation	P
	iii NAS Education Conference	H
	iv CJC	S/TR
February	i Officers' Meeting	S
	ii CJC	P
	iii Treasurers' Report	TR
	iv Education Sub-committee	S
March	i CJC	P/TR/S
	ii LEA Schools' Sub-committee	S
	iii Midland Federation	L
	iv Officers' Meeting	S
	v West Midlands Examination Council	P
April	i CJC	P
	ii LEA Education Committee	S
	iii Conditions of Service Sub-committee	W
	iv Education Sub-Committee	RP
	v College Interim Committee	S
May	i CJC	TR
	ii LEA Education Committee	S
	iii College Interim Committee	S
	iv Midland Federation	RP
June	i CJC	TR
	ii LEA Education Committee	S
	iii National Executive Members' Report	EM
	iv Midland Federation	L
	v Recruitment Sub-committee	H/E
July	i CJC	TR
	ii Midland Federation	L
	iii Education Sub-committee	RP
	iv LEA Schools' Sub-committee	S

Source: As for Table 3.

APPENDIX E

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This appendix will provide a more detailed outline of the research methods on which this study is based, and a discussion of why they were used. Most of the work on which this study was based was carried out between June 1976 and October 1977. The choice of starting date was the result of a combination of relatively random factors such as the research worker's own decisions to register for a higher degree, his acceptance for that degree, the time taken for the initial research proposal to be formulated, and the length of the negotiations with the Coventry NAS/UWT over whether or not to allow the research to be carried out and, subsequently, over the exact role that the research worker was to adopt in carrying out the research.

The completion date for the research was based on much more instrumental considerations. Since much of the business conducted by the local association is determined by the LEA, and since much of the work of this particular LEA is conducted over a period of an academic year, the choice of completion date for the research provided the opportunity to observe a complete cycle of activity. The cyclical nature of much of NAS/UWT activity was recognized by the local association secretary with reference to casework when he pointed out that he received far more requests for this service in the Summer Term of any academic year than in the other two terms. The additional period at the begining of the 1976-77 academic year enabled the research worker to become familiar with the context within which the activity was taking place, to be able to identify the participants and to become known to them. The period at the end of the academic year provided an opportunity to follow through several issues which had not been resolved by the end of the previous term.

The academic year itself provided sufficient opportunity for a broad spectrum of union activity to be observed and yet was of a short enough duration not to provide a mass of data which could not be handled by one research worker.

Methodology

As was pointed out in Chapter 1 four main approaches to the collection of data were used in this research. Documentary evidence was used to provide background material for this study. In particular the local and national publications of the NAS/UWT, the recruitment material distributed to potential members by the local and national organizations and, more especially, the Guide for School Representatives, the union rule book. Most of the data acquired from these sources was used in one of two ways. Most of it provided evidence for the analysis of the shared perceptions, interests and concerns which, it has been argued here, can be identified among NAS/UWT officers and members. Publications relating to conferences and recruitment were especially useful in this regard, as was the conference reports and commentaries to be found in the Association's journal, The Schoolmaster and Career Teacher. Other documentary sources including the local association's Accounts Book, which provided membership figures, and the documents circulated during executive committee meetings, which provided additional information on some of the issues which came up at those meetings, were also used for background material.

The other use to which documentary evidence was put will be dealt with in more detail in the next section where the advantages and disadvantages of research based, in large part, on observation will be considered. Suffice it to say, for the moment, that the local association minutes were used to provide documentary evidence for matters which were first identified through the processes of observation. The Guide was used in a more

direct way to support and supplement the analysis of the ambiguities surrounding the role of the school representative which can be found in Chapter 4. This analysis first suggested itself through observations of the attitudes of officers towards the school representatives during executive and officers meetings. It was, in turn, supported by evidence from the questionnaire given to school representatives who attended the two training courses. The Guide supported and, at the same time, clarified the analysis which was being developed.

The questionnaire given to the school representatives who attended the two training courses which were held in June and July 1977 provided a range of data about their experience as school representatives, their experience within the NAS/UWT, their length of service and their perceptions about their own attitudes towards trade union membership generally, and their membership of the NAS/UWT in particular. This material was used extensively in Chapter 4 to illustrate a range of similarities and differences between different groups of school representatives. It was also used to provide evidence about the nature and extent of the ambiguity which surrounds the office of school representative which led the officers of the association to react in the way in which they did to the election of representatives and to the issue of accreditation.

A significant part of the data was collected through a series of interviews. These fell into three categories. There were those interviews which provided basic background and supplementary material. The interviews with Terry Casey in November 1976, the Coventry Assistant Education Officer in January 1983 and the NUT Press Officer in March 1983, were of this kind. The first two were unstructured discussions of a range of issues related to the Coventry NAS/UWT. The third one was a more structured interview during which the Press Officer responded to a number of questions about the NUT. These

were intended to provide data on which a brief comparison of the two local organizations might be based.

The second type of interview was conducted with the president of the Coventry NAS/UWT at his home in May 1977, and with the treasurer at his school in June 1977. These were structured interviews which were based on a series of topics designed to cover their personal history, their broad responsibilities, the nature of their positions within the local organization and within the wider NAS/UWT contexts, their attitudes towards and opinions about certain central issues which had emerged during the study such as the role of the secretary, the school representatives, the sub-committee system and the main problems facing the local association. This material was used as a basis for Chapter 5 and to provide supporting evidence for other types of data including that based on documentary sources and observations.

The secretary of the local association was the subject of a similar structured interview at his home in June 1977. He was also the subject of the third type of interview which took place on at least six different occasions throughout the period of the study at a variety of venues including the local teachers' centre, the college of education bar and the secretary's home. These were far less structured in that they tended to range across those issues which either the secretary or the research worker felt to be significant for the Coventry NAS/UWT at that particular time. The interviews were, after the first two, initiated by the secretary when he felt that he had an issue worth discussing although, invariably, that issue was not the only one to be discussed. The secretary also used these interviews to pass on relatively confidential data about casework which was not available to the research worker in any other way. The secretary could then be subjected to rigorous questioning about the

methods adopted in particular cases, and the ways in which he evaluated the outcomes and the perceived reactions of others involved in the cases. These informal interviews provided a valuable source of data on the role of the secretary both inside and outside the local association. By their very nature it was easy to record material through detailed notes or, where the level of background noise permitted by use of a tape recorder. The data was used extensively in Chapter 7 on the role of the secretary, especially in the section on casework, and throughout this study to supplement data gathered in other ways, especially through observations.

Fieldwork

The most important source of data, both in terms of its quantity and because of its impact on the shape of the research has been fieldwork. This was in two distinct parts. The minor part in quantity but, nevertheless, a crucial element for the conduct of the research was the informal interaction with members of the executive on social occasions such as the Christmas Dance, in the bar of the teachers' centre after other meetings, and in their own schools where the research worker happened to find himself in connection with this research or on other business. Such interactions enabled the research worker to establish an ethos of mutual confidence and trust that was so necessary for the successful conclusion of the more formal aspects of the fieldwork.

These more formal aspects of fieldwork consisted of attending all the executive meetings as an observer, having access to the documents relating to those meetings, and being party to the discussions which took place in officers' meetings prior to the monthly executive meetings as well as being able to attend the two general meetings which took place during the

period of this study. The bulk of the fieldwork consisted, however, of observing the monthly executive meetings of the Coventry NAS/UWT. This presented a number of problems for the research worker. The first of these was to strike a suitable balance between recording and observing. It proved impossibie for a single research worker to concentrate on the systematic verbatim data recording which an approach based on Bale's Interaction Process Analysis[1] would have required even in the formal setting of the executive meeting. The fieldworker's resort to the tape recorder was similarly inappropriate. This was partly because of the setting, a large room with members dispersed across a considerable distance. More importantly, it was felt by the executive members and by the research worker that the nature of much of the discussion within the executive was such that this technique might have an unacceptably inhibiting effect on discussions. The research worker would thus become too obtrusive to allow normal discourse to take place. A compromise was reached by the research worker between what he felt was ideal and what was acceptable in the circumstances. He attempted to take detailed field notes but decided to supplement these by copious references to more official documents such as minutes.

This decision was taken as a result of the disquiet felt by the research worker over studies based entirely on fieldwork and fieldnotes. This disquiet takes three forms. Firstly, the research worker was unwilling to adopt a merely ethnographic stance to his work similar to that found in the work of, for example Douglas[2] and discussed extensively by Burgess and others who define it as, 'observing and analysing real life situations, of studying actions and activities as they occur'[3].

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1. Bales, R.F. 1950. Intervention Process Analysis: a Method for the study of small groups. Cambridge, Mass, Addison Wesley.
2. Douglas, J.D. 1976. Investigature Social Research. Beverly Hills, California. Sage.
3. Burgess, R.G. (ed) 1982. Field Research. A Source Book and Field Manual. London. George Allen & Unwin, page 1.

A purely ethnographic approach may have led to a more detailed analysis of the minutia of individual interactions within the executive meetings but, at the same time, would also have prevented a sufficiently detailed analysis of the wider context of that interaction to take place. In this instance the total exposure of members' perceptions of situations and activities was not required, nor was it a central part of the analytical process. Far more important for the development of an understanding of the nature of union activity, the patterns of participation, control and influence was an examination of the ways in which discourse was conducted in the various situations against a much broader context. This context was provided by the historical material, the official rules as well as the variety of their interpretation, the minutes of meetings and the other sources to which this research worker had recourse.

The second disquiet is closely related to the first. It is that although fieldwork studies claim to explore the realities of the situation, they often take the situation itself as given. In this study the organizational structure was shaped by rules and procedures. It was, therefore, more than simply the sum of the participants. It was an arena in which the events were played but it was more than that. It was a product of a set of rules through which participation was determined and structured. The same structure was also influenced by the historical development of the local and national associations as well as by the activities of the LEA, not least of which was the shaping of educational provision within the city. Much of this essential data could not be obtained with a methodology based entirely on ethnography.

If an integral part of the research process is to structure and present the final study in such a way that it can be replicated in similar or even in different circumstances, a study based on private fieldnotes serves to make this difficult if not impossible. In order that this work might, as the research worker believes that it ought, be replicated elsewhere within the NAS/UWT or with another union as the subject, much of the fieldwork material has, in the final written form, been supplemented by reference to minutes and other , relevant documents. At the very least,interview sources have been quoted in order that what might otherwise be regarded as merely the subjective interpretation of one research worker has some more objective, identifiable and external validity. For this reason this research has not been written in an ethnographic form. At the same time it was recognised that the confidential and sensitive nature of much of the material contained herein was such that detailed reproduction of conversions, debates, discussions and examples of casework was not appropriate. For this reason also the ethnographic style of presentation was not adopted.

Conclusion

This study has been based on several different research techniques in the belief that different approaches to data collection are appropriate in different circumstances. While it leans heavily on structured interviews and documentary sources and contains a brief excursion in data collection based on a questionnaire, the main form of data collection has been that of observation. The advantages of this form of data collection rest in its immediacy, its potentially direct relevance to the subject of the study, and the way in which it lends itself to almost instantaneous analysis.

The disadvantages have been discussed at length above. The advantages, at least in the collection of data if not in its presentation, outweighed the disadvantages in the context of this research. The limitations of one particular form of presentation of evidence led this research worker to adopt a form of analysis and presentation which may not be normally found in research where the data has been collected in this way. The use of other forms of data collection has, in this instance, led the present research worker to the conclusion that his analysis of the data and its presentation in this study marks a significant attempt to unite the subjective and impressionistic advantages of ethnology with the more structured, objective advantages of positivist research which allows the exploration of wider context historical, political, and social context.

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